

REAL SIMPLE

LIFE MADE EASIER

RELAX!
28 GREAT
VACATION
BOOKS

the food issue

Easy Summer Dinners

Light Meals
in 30
Minutes

Get More
Veggies in
Your Diet

Summer
Fun—
Minus the
Hassles

JULY 2018

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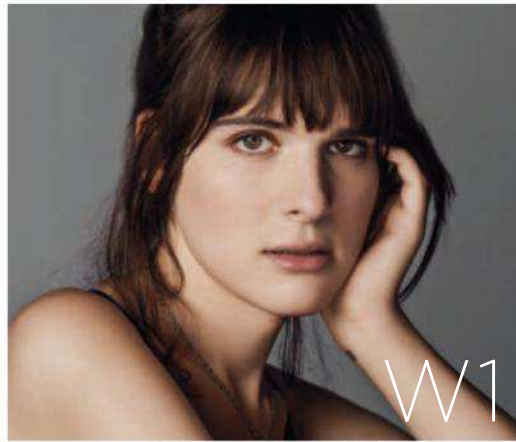
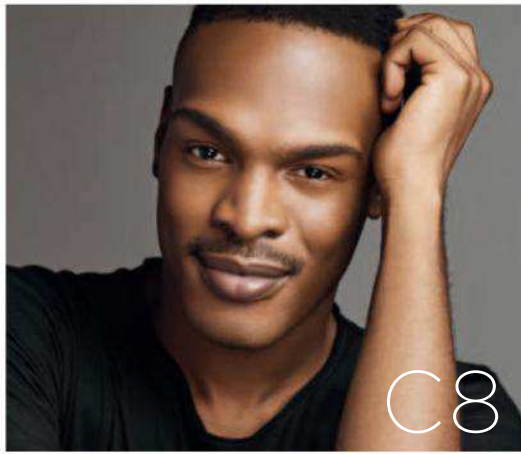


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Thoughts



"Pull up a chair. Take a taste. Come join us.
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—RUTH REICHL, in *Gourmet* magazine (March 2007)

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Editor's Note



REAL SIMPLE
HOME

Why am I sitting in an almost empty apartment, you ask? Well, it won't be empty for long. Over the next few months, we'll be designing the Real Simple Home using all our favorite organizing strategies, design ideas, and innovative products. Look for updates each month—and our big reveal in our October issue!

WHEN YOU'RE FROM Iowa like I am, you hear a lot of jokes about corn. "You look a little...cornfused." "Stop being so corny." You get the picture. But I don't mind, because I absolutely love corn on the cob. (I also don't mind if this makes me seem like a cliché.) Freshly picked, with lots of butter and salt, or chili powder and Mexican farm cheese—it satisfies me on a level that goes beyond appetite, evoking long, lazy summers spent eating ear after ear at the picnic table on our back patio with the shiny, wipe-clean tablecloth.

My father, who grew up in South Carolina, is the same way about peaches. When I was a girl, he used to fly home from visits there with a whole crate of them, and when people in the boarding line questioned him about it, he always had the same response: "If you have to ask why I'm flying north with peaches, then you haven't eaten a South Carolina peach."

Few things connect us to our homes and heritage like the produce actually grown in the ground where we grew up—a source of pride and nostalgia. I haven't lived in Iowa for years, but a bite of corn on the cob takes me right back there. For you, it may be tomatoes or raspberries, okra or watermelon that delivers fond memories beyond the delicious flavor.

So what better month to bring you *Real Simple's* Food Issue than July, when farmers' market stands, grocery produce aisles, and perhaps your own garden are bursting with color-rich foods. This month our food team brings you an A to Z guide to summer cooking (page 42) plus new takes on your favorite backyard picnic dishes (page 120). And don't miss our food director Dawn Perry's weekly show, *Real Simple Cooking School*, on our site for smart recipes and advice all year round.



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July 2018

ON THE COVER



Peel-and-Eat Shrimp with Butter and Herbs

Cook 2 lb. unpeeled jumbo shrimp in a large pot of boiling salted water until pink and just cooked through, 3 to 5 minutes. Toss with 6 Tbsp. melted butter and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped fresh herbs (we like a mix of chives and parsley). Serve with lemon wedges and a lot of napkins.

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AND WAYS TO MAKE LIFE EASIER—EVERY DAY.



MEET ANANDA EIDELSON

FOOD EDITOR
AT REAL SIMPLE

My favorite summer recipe:

Taking advantage of
gorgeously ripe
tomatoes however I can.

The kitchen gadget I can't live without:

A food processor. I love
making dips and
spreads from scratch.

This summer you'll find me:

Trying to convince
people that in-season
melons, like cantaloupe,
are absolutely delicious.

@CITRUSTREEKITCHEN
ON INSTAGRAM



Peek Inside Rebecca Atwood's Studio

We so admire Rebecca
Atwood's story of how
she turned her passion
into her business, and
we can't get over her
stunning studio.

Watch now at [realsimple.com/
rebeccaatwood](https://realsimple.com/rebeccaatwood).




Because Indoors Is Overrated

Feeling inspired by our big backyard
guide on page 106? Head online to shop
every inflatable, hammock, and throw
pillow featured. Plus, get even more
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REAL SIMPLE COOKING SCHOOL

Your favorite live cooking show is now
a Facebook group! Join to chat with
Real Simple food editors and swap tips
and recipes with fellow home cooks.
You'll learn everything you need to know
to get meals on the table with ease.



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Your Words

How do you simplify your cooking routine?

I do the shopping and the prep, and my spouse executes the meal!

CAITLIN ZINSSER, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS

#RSLOVE "PLANTS + A PASTEL CAKE = A PRETTY SUMMER MORNING" @MINT_N_MELON



I live by the words "It's never too early to start prepping dinner."

Whenever I have a few minutes during the day or on the weekend, I do something for dinner ahead of time, whether it's chopping an onion, throwing together a quick salad, or making pasta or quinoa.

EMILY SMITH,
GREENVILLE,
SOUTH CAROLINA

I use what I have in the kitchen

and create meals that are loosely based on a recipe, or no recipe at all.

🐦 @PAULAJSHEDDON

Make sure the tools, pots, and food items you use the most are the most accessible items

on every surface and in every cabinet and drawer. While you're at it, put everything you haven't used in a year up high.

📘 LIORA SELTZER,
NEW YORK CITY

Keep your staple ingredients on hand at all times.

Fresh herbs, good olive oil, lemon, Parmesan, capers—if the pantry is stocked with versatile and quality ingredients, you are guaranteed a good meal every night of the week.

TIG FILSON,
CUMBERLAND, MAINE

While I'm cooking, I keep a "garbage bowl" on the counter

(for veggie scraps, wrappers, egg shells, etc.) to cut down on trips to the trash can. I put everything in something that's already dirty, like an empty spinach container or gently used Tupperware, so I'm not adding to the dirty-dish pile.

ARIANA LAKE,
STEPHENTOWN,
NEW YORK

Rotisserie chicken.

I take it home and repackage it: It's ready when I need to make quiche, chicken soup, chicken salad, you name it. It saves so much time and is easy and economical!

📘 AMY TOOLEY
RADACHI, DAYTON,
OHIO

I order groceries online and pick them up at my local store.

NANCY HARRIS, MANSFIELD, TEXAS

I have my two teenagers each cook one night a week. They have to include a vegetable, and dinner can't be takeout. During the school year, it's typically some variation of pasta or tacos. But it doesn't matter—I get to come home to a fully cooked meal.

JANET KINARD,
ATLANTA

Meal delivery services. It's the new date night!

KATHERINE MOONEY,
SEDONA, ARIZONA



The Instagrammers who shared the photos in this column will receive our Spring Cleaning special edition. Want to be considered for this column? Tag photos on Instagram with #RSLOVE.

I always fill the sink with hot soapy water for cleaning as I go. I can wash and reuse utensils, and when I'm done, the kitchen doesn't have to be cleaned.

HELEN BOUSLAUGH,
WOODLAND,
CALIFORNIA

While prepping meals, we chop extra onions, garlic, or tomatoes and store them in small, lidded containers. For the next few days, we can use them for omelets and garnishes without having to prep again.

TINA HOM CHEN,
REDDING,
CONNECTICUT

I married a man who loves to cook.

MEGAN WAITE,
FREDERICKSBURG,
VIRGINIA


I use two Instant Pots: one for the main or meat dish and the other for the side or dessert. They cook quickly, and clean-up is a snap.

CHRIS STEPHENS,
LUTTRELL, TENNESSEE

I've accepted that I'm in a season of life when I need to spend a little bit more money to buy the prechopped produce. My prep work is minimal, and I can spend time with my son and husband instead!

KRISTIN JONES,
TURNER, MONTANA

I've learned to turn leftovers into something completely different. Meatloaf becomes taco meat; chili becomes tamale pie. The trick is to add fresh elements and stay within the same flavor family.

 MARY PIELENZ
HAMPTON, BOZEMAN,
MONTANA

Whoever gets off work first has to cook dinner. The kids clean up afterward. This works well for our family because my husband and I work various shifts throughout the week.


BRANDY BISWELL,
PUYALLUP,
WASHINGTON



#RSLOVE "COME SAIL AWAY WITH US!"
@CHARLIEDOODLE7

NEXT QUESTION...

What good habit do you wish you'd started earlier?

 Send an email to yourwords@realsimple.com and let us know your answer to this question. Your response could appear on these pages.

My daughter has been "helping" in the kitchen since before she could walk.

Cooking with her allows me to turn a chore into fun together time. I'm not frazzled about getting dinner on the table so we can spend time together; we already are together.

 KATIE MALTAIS, LITTLETON, COLORADO

The Short List

FIVE BOOKS THAT WON'T DISAPPOINT

By Elizabeth Sile

Dystopian love story

In Thea Lim's *An Ocean of Minutes*, it's 1981 and thousands are dying from a pandemic. A time-travel company starts recruiting people to work as bonded laborers in the future, in exchange for care for sick loved ones in the present. Polly signs on to help her soulmate, Frank, and they make a plan to meet in 1993. But Polly is rerouted to 1998 and must find him. Lim's inventive novel deftly explores time, class, and migration.

Road-trip tale

When newly widowed Pival hears her son, Rahi (cast out of the family for being gay), has died, she refuses to believe it. Hoping to locate him, she books a tour of the U.S. with an Indian-owned—or so she thinks—company. Pival sets out with struggling actress Rebecca and first-time guide Satya, a Bangladeshi immigrant, on a cross-country trip that will change them all. Leah Franqui's *America for Beginners* is a heartfelt novel about forgiveness and acceptance.

Beach read

In Miriam Parker's *The Shortest Way Home*, we meet Hannah, a soon-to-be California business school graduate with a lucrative job offer in New York. When she and her boyfriend, Ethan, take a trip to Sonoma, she finds herself questioning where her life is going and abruptly accepts a job at a failing winery. Parker's bingeable novel is perfect for those who've ever fantasized about their own path not taken.

Medical history

Though the medical community now accepts the use of incubators for treating premature infants, it wasn't always this way. In *The Strange Case of Dr. Couney*, journalist Dawn Raffel explores the career of Martin Couney, a so-called doctor who saved thousands of preemies through his baby incubator sideshow at Coney Island in the first half of the 20th century. With fantastic detail, Raffel brings to life this complicated pioneer.

Great for book club

Clock Dance, the new novel from Pulitzer Prize winner Anne Tyler, follows Willa Drake during 1957, 1977, 1997, and 2017. She moves through life unsatisfied—with her stormy mother, with her headstrong husband—yet resigned to her milquetoast ways. But a call from a stranger will challenge Willa to put herself first. Anyone who's struggled to find her place in the world will cheer for Willa and adore Tyler's effortless (as usual) prose.

For more book recommendations, visit realsimple.com/newbooks.



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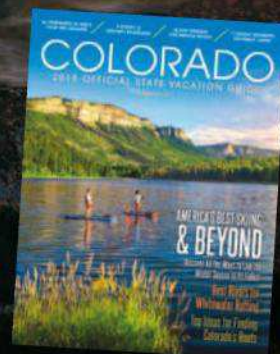


HANNAH SHORT \$49
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RIPTIDE BEACH TOWEL \$55
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EVERYTHING OUR EDITORS ARE BUZZING ABOUT THIS MONTH

what we love



Fresh tools for flower lovers

COLORFUL REMINDER

A sculptural, curved design plus an enameled-zinc finish in a sherbet tone add up to a good-lookin' watering can. Display yours front and center as a reminder to give plants a little TLC.

TO BUY: Popsicle Watering Cans, \$24 each; shopterrain.com.

PROP STYLING BY KATJA GREFF

WHAT WE LOVE



1 GOOD SEEDS

This organic, non-GMO seed collection was developed by chefs and breeders who kept flavor in mind—not just yield and shelf life. **TO BUY:** Row7 Seeds, from \$3.50; row7seeds.com.

2 FLORAL FOLLOW

Catch farmer and florist Erin Benzakein's stunning Instagram snaps of in-season blooms at her Washington State flower farm (@floretflower).

3 MARKET FINDS

Adjust this open-ended tote's sides to fit your haul. **TO BUY:** The Floral Society Canvas Market Tote, \$52; thefloralsociety.com.

4 TOOL OF THE TRADE

Florist-approved, these scissors are ideal for cutting flowers, herbs, and vegetables in the garden. **TO BUY:** The Floral Society Floral Clippers, \$62; food52.com.

5 KNEE SAVER

Pretty and functional, this cushion is decked out in a William Morris wallpaper design originally printed in 1834. **TO BUY:** V&A William Morris Kneeler, \$42; Spur Line Supply Co., 505-242-6858.

6 GREEN HIDEAWAYS

A roundup of secret urban gardens offers inspiration in a lovely package. **TO BUY:** *Green Escapes* by Toby Musgrave, \$30; phaidon.com.

7 LASTING LABELS

Keep track of your seedlings with these clever sticks—then use them again next season. **TO BUY:** Kikkerland Reusable Garden Markers, \$5 for 12; kikkerland.com.

8 NAILBRUSH

This post-gardening essential is made with beechwood and hog bristle. **TO BUY:** Turner & Harper Nailbrush, \$22; cloveandcreek.com.

Carry everything, thanks to clever snap closures.



EAT YOUR HEART OUT.



This 4th of July, declare your independence from unhealthy snacking. Wonderful Almonds are heart healthy, a good source of protein and fiber, and won't get in the way of your summer goals.

Scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, such as almonds, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. See nutrition information for fat content. © 2018 Wonderful Pistachios & Almonds LLC. All Rights Reserved. WONDERFUL, the Package Design and accompanying logos are trademarks of Wonderful Pistachios & Almonds LLC or its affiliates. WA180411-20



Pretty Smart

EYE SHADOW THAT SMELLS LIKE
PEACHES AND SEVEN OTHER BEAUTY
BUYS TO SAVE YOUR SANITY

By Heather Muir Maffei

COVERGIRL
COVERGIRL

COVERGIRL TRUNAKED PALETTE IN PEACH PUNCH

Peaches are always in season with this sweetly scented eye shadow palette (one whiff and you're instantly happier). The sleek compact houses eight neutral shades—some shimmery, some matte—that require only one swipe over lids and don't crumble onto your cheeks. **TO BUY:** \$13.50; at drugstores.

BIORÉ CHARCOAL CLEANSING MICELLAR WATER

Your nightly skin-care routine just got a lot easier. Pour a splash of this no-rinse cleanser onto a cotton pad and swipe over skin to remove makeup, dirt, and oil. Charcoal leaves skin clear and mattified.

TO BUY: \$7; at drugstores.

AOA STUDIO AOA FACE MASK APPLICATOR

Keep your fingers and nails clean when applying a face mask with this silicone-tipped tool. The sweeping motion gives the at-home treatment a spa-like feel. **TO BUY:** \$1; shopmissa.com.

BENEFIT HELLO HAPPY SOFT BLUR FOUNDATION

Finally, an unfussy foundation. Shake and apply with fingertips (you don't even need a mirror) to even out skin tone and cover imperfections. In 12 shades.

TO BUY: \$29; benefitcosmetics.com.



PIXI BY PETRA LASHLIFT 188 DOUBLE BRUSH MASCARA

All your mascara needs in one tube. The volumizing brush adds fullness, while the precision brush defines inner and lower lashes sans smudging.

TO BUY: \$18; pixibeauty.com.

DP HUE COOL BRUNETTE SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER

If your brown hair turns brassy, use this duo once a week. The deep blue pigment cancels out red and orange tones without stripping hair, thanks to nourishing hibiscus flower extract.

TO BUY: \$24 each; sephora.com.



ORIBE SERENE SCALP SOOTHING LEAVE-ON TREATMENT

Remove flakes and soothe an itchy scalp (maybe after a dye job) with this cooling mint-and-chamomile cream. Part damp or dry hair, apply, then massage and style.

TO BUY: \$48; oribe.com.

NARS FULL VINYL LIP LACQUER

This grown-up gloss has a special applicator: One side deposits the perfect dose; the other evenly spreads it.

TO BUY: \$26 each; narscosmetics.com.

For a great summer foundation for oily skin, go to realsimple.com/bestfoundation.

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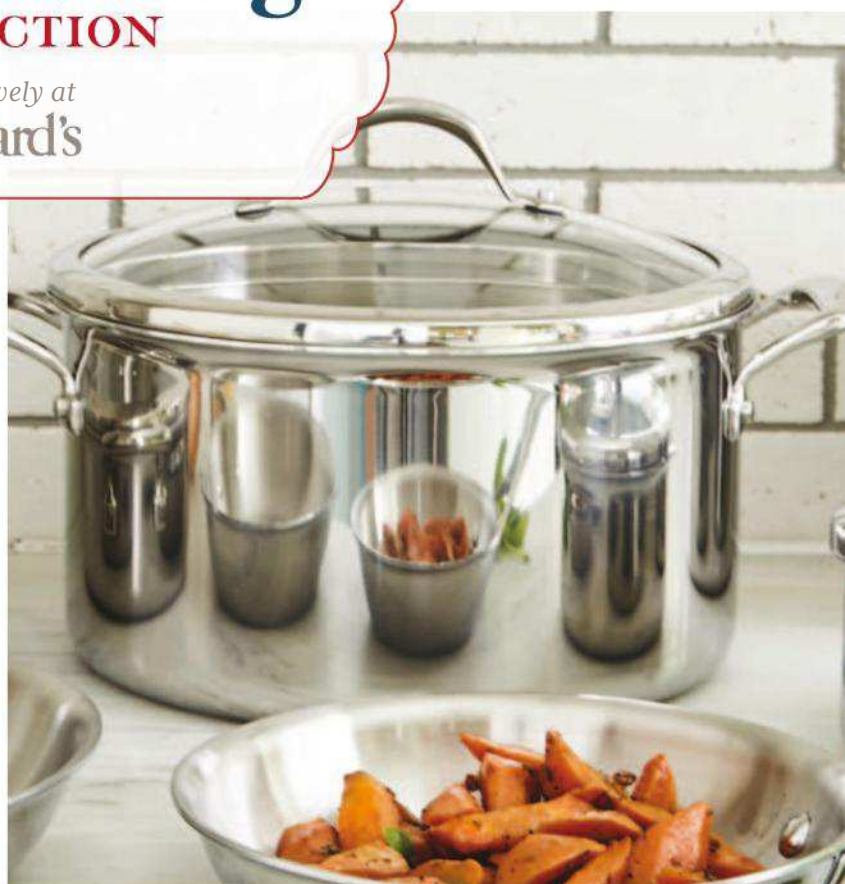
SUMMER 2018

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DILLARDS.COM/SOUTHERNLIVING

The Staple

Apple cider vinegar (or ACV, as it's often called) adds more than just sour notes to food. Because it's made from fermented apple cider, it has a subtly sweet flavor and tastes as good in a vinaigrette as it does whisked into a glaze for grilled ribs or chicken. Cucumbers soaked in a simple solution of ACV, sugar, salt, and dill make for the easiest pickles we've ever met. Plus, ACV offers exactly the right balance to our favorite summer jam. Or add a splash to cold seltzer for a tart soda alternative. Filtered versions will be golden and clear, while unfiltered versions may contain some sediment, as well as the "mother," the cloudy (and totally harmless) result of the natural fermentation process. Use filtered and unfiltered versions interchangeably in recipes.



PROP STYLING BY CECILIA ELGUERO FOR KATE RYAN INC.

Quick Ideas

1 CIDER-MUSTARD GLAZE

Stir together 1 cup apple cider vinegar, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup lightly packed brown sugar, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup whole-grain mustard, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. each kosher salt and black pepper in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until reduced to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup, 30 to 35 minutes. Serve over pork or chicken.

2 DAY DILL PICKLES

Place $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups water, $\frac{2}{3}$ cup apple cider vinegar, 1 Tbsp. sugar, 2 tsp. kosher salt, 2 thinly sliced garlic cloves, 1 tsp. mustard seeds, and 2 sprigs fresh dill in a quart-size jar. Shake until sugar and salt dissolve. Quarter 8 Persian cucumbers (about 1 lb.) lengthwise and add to jar. Cover and chill overnight.

3 STRAWBERRY-CIDER JAM

Stir together 3 cups chopped strawberries, 1 cup sugar, $\frac{2}{3}$ cup apple cider vinegar, and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. kosher salt in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil, stirring often to dissolve sugar. Reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring often, until liquid is reduced and mixture is thickened, about 30 minutes. Pour into a shallow dish and chill for 1 hour. Store tightly covered in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks.

By Dawn Perry

Recipes by
Julia Levy



TOOTHPICK VESSEL

Keep implements hygienically contained in this adorable sea creature. Place it next to a plate of finger foods or a cheese board for easy access.

TO BUY: Jonah Toothpick Dispenser, \$16; animicausa.com.



POUR-OVER TO-GO

Stay caffeinated with this single-serve coffee brewer. Pop open the sleeve to reveal roasted direct-trade Guatemalan grounds. It fits snugly over a mug; just add hot water.

TO BUY: Dripkit Pour Over Packets, \$15 for 5; dripkit.coffee.



PICNIC BASKET 2.0

This backpack includes service for four, a detachable blanket, and a zippered beverage sleeve. The insulated back pocket helps lunch stay cold. In two colors; free personalization available.

TO BUY: Adventure Backpack, \$125; initials-inc.com.



SUN BLOCKER

This UPF 50-plus wide-brimmed raffia hat blocks 97.5 percent of ultraviolet rays. The internal drawstring ensures it won't fly away.

TO BUY: Napa hat, \$52; wallarooohats.com.



PET-FOOD TRANSPORT

Leaving Spot or Fluffy with a sitter? Pack this BPA-free six-cup container, which comes with a carrying handle. Bowls for food and water attach at each end.

TO BUY: Gamma2 Travel-tainer, \$10; chewy.com.



MAGNIFYING LIGHT

Fine print, you've met your match. This sleek gadget features a touch sensor LED and magnification power that can be adjusted from 3x to 6x. Rechargeable with included USB cable.

TO BUY: LED Magnifier, \$49; store.moma.org.

Little Helpers

SIX SMART PRODUCTS
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By Brandi Broxson



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New Uses for Old Things

Beach Edition

FOUR AROUND-THE-HOUSE ITEMS GET THEIR DAY IN THE SUN
THANKS TO THESE CLEVER HACKS.

By Brandi Broxson

SLED AS GEAR CARRIER

Use a plastic sled to easily move beach bags, umbrellas, and toys across soft sand. Bonus: It makes a great seat for wet bums come lunchtime.



BABY POWDER AS SAND REMOVER

Quickly banish wet sand from feet or legs by sprinkling powder on skin, then wiping away with a towel.



CORK AS KEY BUOY

For peace of mind, screw an eye hook (found at craft and hardware stores) into the end of a wine cork, then attach your key ring.



FUNNEL AS SANDCASTLE MOLD

No need for store-bought tools. A funnel's curious shape makes it perfect for building sand towers. You can also use it to fill a moat with sea water.

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Rethinking the Kitchen

WE'RE BUSY DECORATING AND ORGANIZING AN ENTIRE HOME THAT YOU'LL GET TO SEE THIS FALL. AS A PREVIEW, THE TEAM BEHIND THE KITCHEN SHARES THEIR TIPS FOR MAKING THE SPACE PRETTY AND PRACTICAL.



Donna employed many of these tips in her own kitchen, seen here.



Donna Garlough
Designer

Donna is the author of *Your Home, Your Style* and style director at Joss & Main in Boston.



Ashley Murphy
Organizer

Ashley is the Chicago-based cofounder of Neat Method, a national organizing service.

STORE STRATEGICALLY

Open your dishwasher along with the cabinets and drawers you think your everyday dishes and utensils should live in. You should be able to easily unload into those spaces while the dishwasher is completely open.

LIGHT THE WAY

Make sure your fixtures are large and bright enough to illuminate your food-prep and dining spaces. Consider swapping flush-mount fixtures or recessed lighting for pendants that bring the light source closer to the work area.

CLEAR SURFACES

Stretches of clean countertop will make a kitchen feel larger. Place items that you don't use daily in a spot out of sight. Opt for shelf risers to create additional storage space for those items within your cabinets.

RELOCATE SPICES

Working with limited cabinet space? Stash spices in a drawer instead. Decant them into shallow, wide jars and label the tops so you can see what you have at a glance. Keep your favorites toward the front.

MAKE IT YOURS

A bold wallpaper in the dining nook or a bright, patterned mat in front of the sink adds charm without taking up space. Add personality pieces like a pretty houseplant, a collection of cookbooks, or favorite serveware on open shelving.

ADVERTISEMENT

EVERYTHING BUT THE KITCHEN **STINK**

The kitchen can often be ground zero for unpleasant scents and tough odors. Here are tips to help you fight those smells and keep your kitchen fresh and clean.

1. HANG IT UP

Damp kitchen towels and aprons attract dirt and develop musty scents. Add small hooks around the kitchen to hang them between uses so they can dry quickly. If kitchen towels do need a wash, make sure to use ARM & HAMMER™ Plus OxiClean™ Odor Blasters Detergent to eliminate musty odors.



Learn more at
WWW.ARMANDHAMMER.COM

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF
CHILDREN



3. CURTAIN CALL

The cotton curtains in your kitchen can often pick up cooking odors—from the onions on Taco Tuesday to garlic from pasta night. Make sure to toss them in the wash at least every three months to keep them smelling fresh.



FRESH & EASY

Keeping your kitchen odor-free has never been easier. With these simple tips, you can eliminate those unwelcome odors and make food prep a little more pleasant.



◀ OPEN HERE

2. ZAP IT CLEAN

Does your kitchen sponge have a stink? There's an easy way to fix that. Saturate it with water, then throw it in the microwave for one minute. (That said, no kitchen sponge should be used for more than two weeks.)



4. A SALTY SOLVE

Freshen up your wood cutting boards or surfaces with common table salt and lemon. Just sprinkle the wood with salt, then scrub a half-cut lemon over the surface. Let it sit for about five minutes then do a final rinse with a clean wet sponge.



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the realist

 For flag-flying etiquette, visit realsimple.com/americanflag.

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR AMERICAN FLAG

If you fly your flag year-round, aim to wash it once a month. Only fly it on holidays? A once-a-season wash is recommended, says Mary Gagliardi, who serves as Dr. Laundry for the Clorox Company. Run a polyester or nylon flag through a gentle warm water cycle (apply a pretreatment on dirt or pollen stains). Lay it flat on clean towels to air-dry. A cotton flag's colors may bleed, so handwash it in a basin with detergent and lukewarm water. After rinsing, roll the flag in a clean towel (like a sleeping bag) and gently squeeze out any water. Place a pillowcase or dish towel over the flag and press with a warm iron—this will quickly dry the flag and help reduce color transfer, says Gagliardi. Unsure of the material? Call your dry cleaner—some offer free American flag cleaning in July and beyond. If your flag is faded, torn, or frayed beyond repair, retire it, says Jill Druskis, Americanism director at the American Legion. Drop it off at an American Legion or Veterans of Foreign Wars post, or check with your local scout troop about a dignified disposal.

By Brandi Broxson

Organize This

JAMIE HORD, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER AND FOUNDER OF HORDERLY, SERVES UP HER TIPS FOR NEATLY ARRANGING THE HOME BAR.



1 TAKE IT UP THE WALL

Turn your supplies into a visual and functional display. Save space on a lower surface by storing wine bottles and glassware on wall-mounted shelves. **TO BUY:** Holman wineglass shelf, \$149, and wine bottle shelf, \$119; potterybarn.com.

2 STYLE YOUR SPIRITS

Make your storage spot feel balanced by arranging larger bottles toward the back and shorter containers and trays near the front. A bar cart provides a mobile surface and can be tucked out of the way when you're not entertaining. **TO BUY:** Threshold Wood & Glass gold-finish bar cart, \$120; target.com.

3 DECANT THE BASICS

Stow everyday spirits in pretty glass decanters, labeled appropriately, to avoid subpar-looking bottles. Just make sure the decanters remain tightly sealed. **TO BUY:** Kovot 6-piece liquor and alcohol label tag set, \$22; wayfair.com.

4 SWITCH UP SHAPES

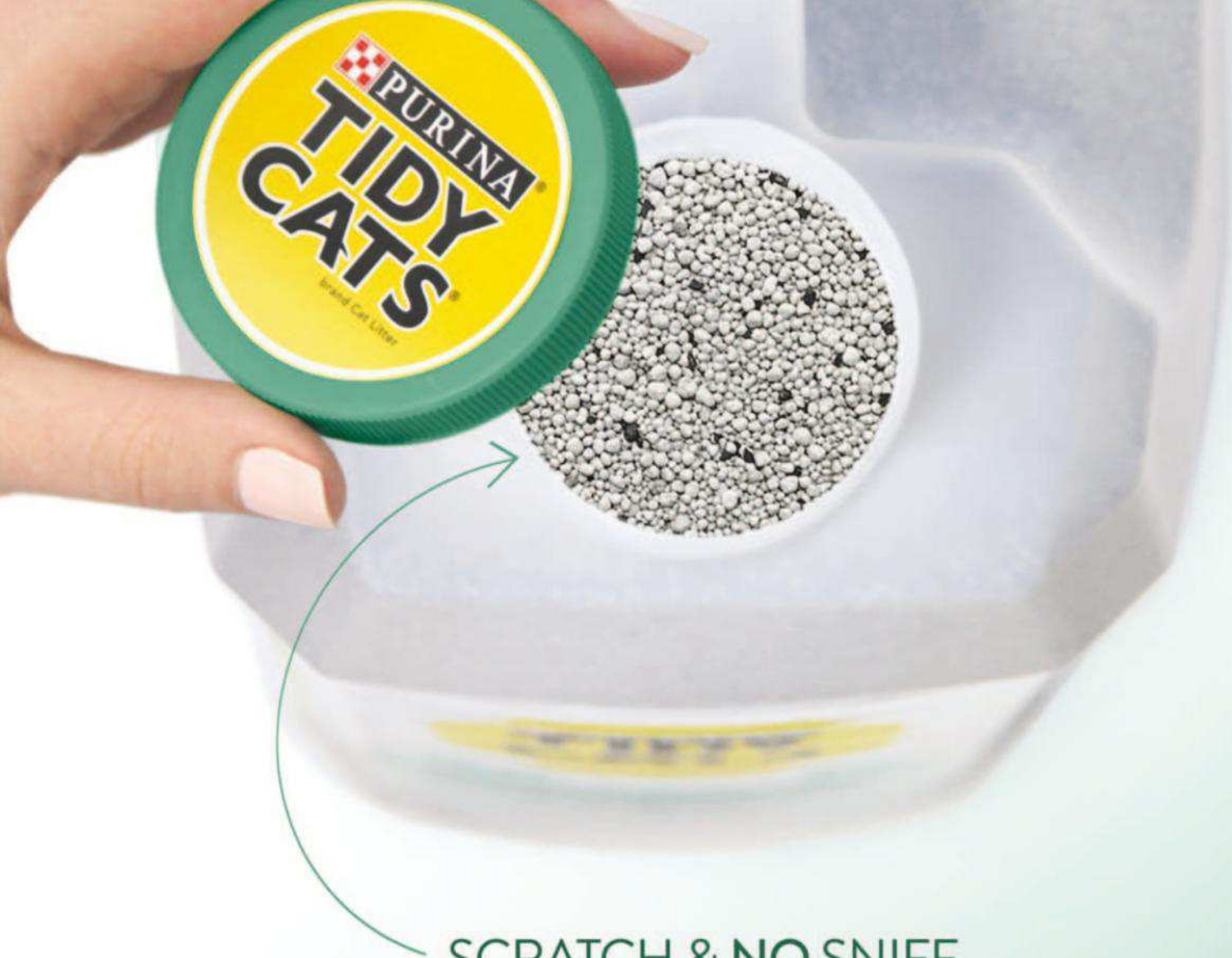
If your bar area is kept on display, layer in trays and other elements that contrast with the shape of your cart. Here, round bowls and an oval tray complement the rectangular surfaces.

5 LEAVE ROOM

Prevent your stocked bar from looking cluttered by leaving some breathing room. A collection of clear drinkware can also give the illusion of open space.

 Discover more ways to elevate your drink station at realsimple.com/homebar.

PROP STYLING BY KATJA GREFF. HARRISON BAR TOOL SET, \$69; POTTERYBARN.COM. BROOKLYN GLASS DECANTER, \$30; WORLDMARKET.COM FOR SIMILAR



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Things Cooks Know

STRATEGIES, TECHNIQUES, AND TIPS ON
ALL THINGS SUMMER—FROM THE
 REAL SIMPLE TEST KITCHEN TO YOURS

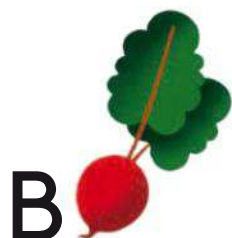
By Ananda Eidelstein



A

Agua fresca

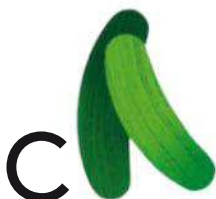
is our drink of summer. Blend watermelon, cucumber, or cantaloupe with lime juice and a little sugar; strain and serve over ice.



B

Beets

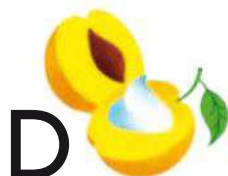
of all types, shaved raw with a mandoline, bring texture to a leafy green salad. Add them anywhere you're craving a bit of color and crunch.



C

Cucumbers

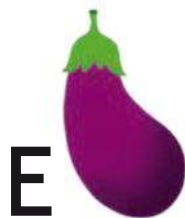
soak up even more flavor when smashed, then sliced. Toss with apple cider vinegar, a sliced shallot, and a pinch of salt for a bracing take.



D

Dollop

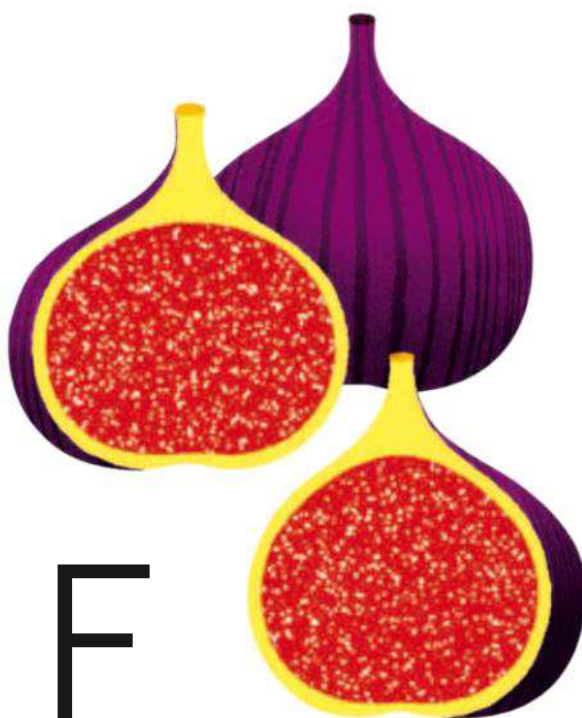
a spoonful of homemade whipped cream over fresh summer fruit, like halved strawberries or sliced stone fruit, for the easiest dessert ever.



E

Eggplant

charred whole on the grill makes a silky base for baba ghanoush. Discard the skin, then blend the flesh with 2 tablespoons each tahini and olive oil, a squeeze of lemon juice, and salt and pepper to taste. Serve with grilled pita.



F

Figs

are a real summer treat eaten raw out of hand or grilled and drizzled with honey and flaky sea salt.



G

Gazpacho

made with ripe tomatoes or cucumbers is a savory way to cool down. Process 4 chopped green heirloom tomatoes or 4 chopped mini seedless cucumbers, 2 slices white bread, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil, 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar, 1 teaspoon kosher salt, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cayenne in a blender until smooth. Serve chilled, topped with a spoonful of sour cream.



H

Herbs

are at their best this time of year. Mix and match tender varieties, like basil and mint, and use them as you would salad greens.



I

Ice cream scoops easiest with a hot scoop; dip one in a bowl of hot water between each serving to make scooping a breeze.



J

Jams

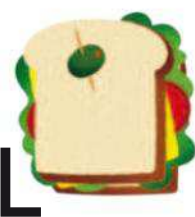
keep summer going long after it's gone. Cook 2 pounds plums, pitted cherries, or tomatoes with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar, a squeeze of lemon juice, and a pinch of salt until thickened. Refrigerate or freeze to enjoy through the fall.



K

Keep

lemonade and a bottle of sparkling wine in the fridge at all times. You'll be ready to pour a quick refreshment whenever unexpected guests drop by.



L

Leafy greens

of all kinds, such as Bibb, Boston, and red leaf lettuce, crop up at markets throughout summer; try them in sandwiches or as the main attraction in a tossed salad.



M

Melon,

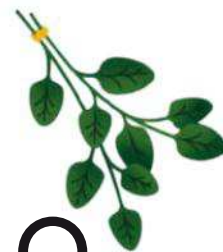
like honeydew or cantaloupe, isn't just for snacking: Toss with olive oil, salt, black pepper, and crushed red pepper to make a side salad.



N

Nasturtium

leaves and flowers add peppery notes when tossed into salads or tucked into sandwiches—look for them among the other greens at the farmers market.



O

Oregano,

when fresh, bursts with flavor and is a surprising substitute for basil or parsley. Have extra? Tie a bunch with kitchen twine and hang it to dry for DIY dried oregano.



P

Packing for a picnic is easier with an insulated thermos big enough to hold the gazpacho. It'll stay chilled until you're ready to serve.



Q

Quiche

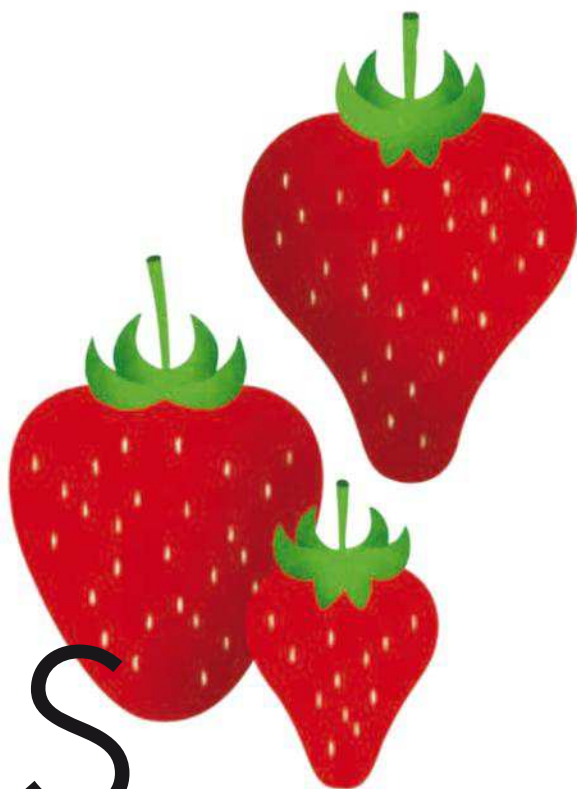
with roasted peppers and corn helps use up extra bushels. Whisk together 6 large eggs, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup half-and-half, 2 sliced roasted peppers, 2 cups raw corn kernels (from 3 ears), and 1 cup shredded Cheddar. Season with salt and pepper and pour into a premade crust. Bake at 350°F until just set in the center, about 45 minutes.



R

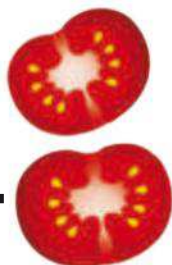
Radishes

with softened cultured butter and flaky salt are an easy and sophisticated hors d'oeuvre for any gathering. Keep the radish greens attached for added wow factor.



S

Strawberries can get mushy and grow mold more quickly if stored wet. Avoid washing them until ready to eat, and keep them in a partially covered container lined with paper towels to absorb any excess moisture.



T

Tomatoes

sliced and seasoned with salt will always be the juicy stars of summer.



U

Upside-down cakes

hiding fresh fruit, like nectarines, apricots, or peaches, show off summer's bounty.



V

Vinaigrettes

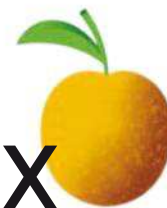
can perk up more than just salads. Use them to marinate meats before grilling or drizzle over corn for a surprise finish.



W

Wax beans

are a stunning companion to regular green beans. Look for yellow and purple varieties for a modern rendition of your three-bean salad.



X

Ximenia

is the plum-like fruit you've probably never heard of. Halve it, grill it, and serve it with ice cream.



Y

Yogurt

can go sweet with fresh fruit or savory with veggies and grilled meats; season with salt, pepper, and a clove of grated garlic.



Z

Zucchini

and summer squash can be shaved into ribbons and eaten raw. Toss with a lemon vinaigrette and a handful of toasted pistachios or almonds.

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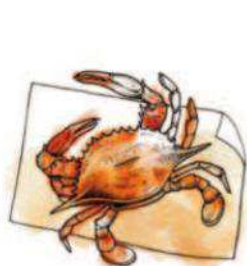
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CRAB HOUSE SINCE 1974.

By Yolanda Wikel



1 PREP FOR THE MESS

Lay down butcher paper or newspaper and grab plenty of paper towels. You'll also need a paring knife, a mallet (in a pinch, a hammer will do), a bowl for empty shells, and a cutting board to protect your table against potential whacks. And, of course, cooked crabs. Blue and Dungeness crabs are usually served whole, so you can use these instructions for either, says Whalen. "Don't be too concerned about size—just select a heavy one." Have melted butter at the ready too.



2 POP OPEN THE SHELL

Place the crab on its back, belly up. Slide a knife under the "apron"—a small tab that resembles the Washington Monument if the crab is male and the United States Capitol if it's female—and pull it backward to break it off; discard. Flip the crab over and, while holding the bottom, insert the tip of the knife between the shells, in the opening where the apron was. Twist to detach the crab's back shell and expose the inner cavity.



3 REMOVE THE INEDIBLE BITS

Scrape out the not-for-consumption lungs, which look gray and spongy, using the knife, a spoon, or your hands. You'll see the yellowish brown substance some call the mustard; that's the hepatopancreas, an organ that filters out toxins. "It's considered a delicacy, with a strong flavor people either like or dislike," notes Whalen. Generally, it's safe to eat as long as the crab is from noncontaminated waters. Make the call to sample it or scoop it out.



4 BUTTERFLY THE BODY

Break the crab in half with your hands. Whalen then likes to cut it down the center with a knife to make it even. Splitting the crab in half will let you see the crabmeat separated into chambers. "You can then just take the meaty morsels out with your fingers," says Whalen.



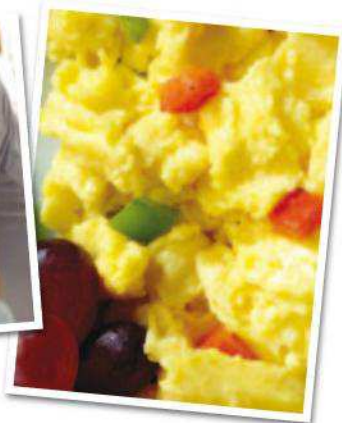
5 SNAP OFF THE LEGS

While holding a crab half in one hand, use your other hand to pull each leg off with a slight twisting motion. "If all goes well, when you remove the leg at the joint, the crabmeat will slide out in a chunk," says Whalen. At the base of the back legs, called the backfins, you'll find the mother lode: succulent lump crabmeat. The small appendages in the middle aren't usually worth the trouble, but try sucking the meat out.



6 MASTER THE CRACK

If the meat didn't come easily out of the legs, you'll need the mallet. Word of caution: Be gentle. "Otherwise the shell will shatter and you'll have to pick the fragments from the meat," says Whalen. Try this trick: Hold your knife vertically, with the tip of the blade on the center of the leg. Then firmly tap the blade with the mallet to slightly fracture the shell and extract the meat in one solid piece. Use the same technique for the claw, but hit the blade slightly harder, right below the pincers.



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Show Your Hands Some Love

Hands take a beating. The skin is thinner—it has the consistency of an eyelid—and more sensitive than the skin on your face. Plus, hands have to endure all that sun exposure, frequent washing, and oversanitizing. Here's how to give them a little more attention when it comes to your beauty routine—and end up with a pair you'll be proud to show off.

By Heather Muir Maffei

Pamper them

When you get the rare opportunity to treat yourself, chances are you focus on your face. But because your hands work even harder and are more prone to signs of aging, extend some self-care south with these at-home treatments. Use a scrub (a face or body one will do) to help remove dead skin cells so your cream works better. Make dingy nails dazzle by running a lemon wedge over nailbeds—a trick hand models use. Before bed, slick on a balm (try Rituals The Ritual of Dao Night Balm, \$17; rituals.com) and put on moisture-sealing cotton gloves. If you have a special event, stick on the hyaluronic acid-infused Beauty Bioscience Upper Hand Brightening Patches (\$50 for 8 pairs; nordstrom.com) to smooth and plump.

ON HER NAILS: Chanel Le Vernis in Légèreté, \$28; chanel.com.

Smooth skin

"Locking in moisture each time you wash your hands can help reduce the appearance of fine lines," says Shereene Idriss, MD, of Union Square Laser Dermatology in New York City. "Daily application of SPF 30 sunscreen moisturizer is key," says Rebecca Kazin, MD, associate director at the Washington Institute of Dermatologic Laser Surgery in Washington, D.C., who advises

keeping one in your bag to reapply throughout the day. "Apply it from your hands to your elbows so you aren't cutting off at your wrists," says Doris Day, MD, a dermatologist in New York City and the author of *Beyond Beautiful*, who recommends retinol to treat lines. Try Chantecaille Retinol Hand Cream (\$78; bloomingdales.com). Apply it every other night until your skin builds tolerance

to the retinol, then bump up to nightly use. "Whatever anti-aging products you put on your face should also be applied to the backs of the hands," says Kazin. "Wear gloves when cleaning with chemicals and limit gel manicures to special occasions, since UV light can be damaging. When you do get one, apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen 20 minutes prior."

ON HER NAILS: Apply two coats of OPI Infinite Shine Long-Wear Nail Lacquer in Frenchie Likes to Kiss? (\$12.50; ulta.com) and let dry. Using a striper brush, dot the center of the lower nail with Essie Seaglass Shimmers Collection in World Is Your Oyster (\$9; essie.com), then paint from either side to complete the half-moon.

CUTICLE TLC

Resist cutting and picking cuticles. Doing so can damage the baby nail cells underneath, causing infection and deformed nails. Gently push them back instead.

Fade spots

The sun is the hands' number one enemy, and since hands are often exposed, they accumulate a lot of UV damage, causing discoloration. "Our most powerful defense against photodamage is sunscreen," says Michelle Henry, MD, clinical instructor of dermatology at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York City, who recommends applying an SPF 30 broad-spectrum sunscreen during the day to ward off new spots and a brightening serum with tranexamic acid at night to reduce existing spots. Skin-Medica Lytera 2.0 Pigment Correcting Serum (\$154; skinmedica.com) is pricey but potent and works on your face too. "Wear sun-protective fingerless gloves when gardening, golfing, and driving long distances," suggests Day, who wears activewear with thumbholes that covers her hands. For faster results, ask your dermatologist about a chemical peel or laser treatments like Fraxel, which may brighten skin.

ON HER NAILS: Essie Gel Couture in Take Me to Thread, \$11.50; essie.com.

THE NEATEST NAILS

Dip an angled eyeliner brush in nail polish remover and trace around the perimeter of your nails to clean up the lines, says Essie manicurist Evelyn Lim, who created the looks on these pages.



THE REALIST

Pump up the volume

Like our faces, our hands lose collagen over time, resulting in crepey skin and more prominent veins. "The less fat you have in your hands, the more your veins will show," explains Day, who offers her patients the FDA-approved filler Radiesse. "It's one poke, and you get instant results that last up to a year," she says. Most patients need one or two sessions and experience mild soreness and swelling. If you prefer to skip the needle, "apply a hyaluronic acid serum to the backs of hands," says Kazin, who likes PCA Skin Hyaluronic Acid Boosting Serum (\$115; pcaskin.com), which doubles as a facial serum.

ON HER NAILS: Sally Hansen Complete Salon Manicure Madeline Poole Collection in Vinyl Tap Mix, \$8; at Target.

PROLONG A PERFECT 10

To prevent premature chipping, paint the top edge of each nail after every coat, wait two minutes between coats, and avoid heat while drying.

 For product recs from women who work with their hands, go to realsimple.com/hands.

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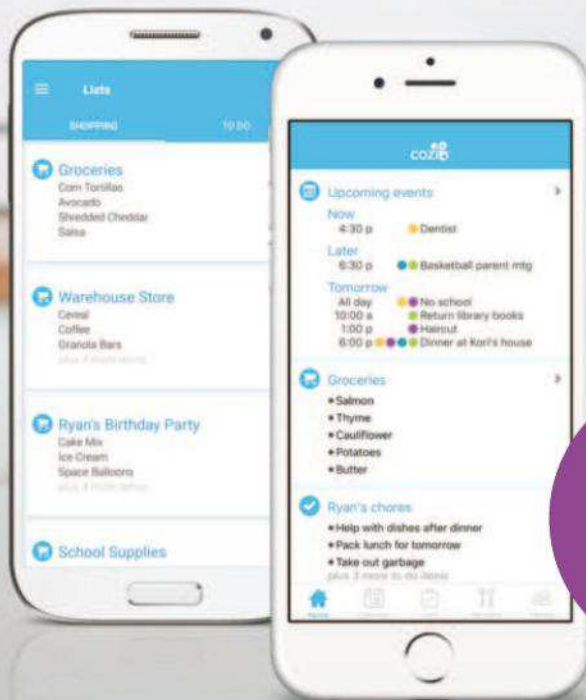
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By Lisa DeSantis

REALSIMPLE
ROAD TEST



BEST FACE

James Read Gradual Tan H₂O Tan Drops Face

Create your ideal color by adding this water-based liquid to your regular moisturizer. Mix the combo in your palm, smooth onto your face and neck, then wash your hands. Add two drops for a subtle, sun-kissed look or four for a more dramatic golden glow.

TO BUY: \$38; net-a-porter.com.



BEST TIME-SAVER

St. Tropez Gradual Tan One Minute Pre-Shower Tanning Mousse

Busy women, this is for you. Rub on this foam, wait one minute (!), then rinse off—no stick, no stink. Color develops over eight hours.

TO BUY: \$20; ulta.com.



BEST BODY BRONZER

Vita Liberata Body Blur Instant HD Skin Finish

Event tonight? Smooth on this tinted body lotion for an instant glow that hides imperfections and won't rub off on your clothes. **TO BUY:** \$45; sephora.com.



BEST IN-SHOWER

Jergens Natural Glow Wet Skin Moisturizer

Once you're done showering, turn off the water, apply, then pat dry. Subtle color builds with continued use. **TO BUY:** \$9; at drugstores.



BEST GRADUAL GLOW

L'Oréal Paris Sublime Bronze Hydrating Self-Tanning Milk

Sub in this hydrating body lotion for your regular moisturizer three days a week for even color. **TO BUY:** \$13; at drugstores.



BEST REMOVER

Tan-Luxe Glyco Water

If your tan is fading unevenly, mist this glycolic spray onto skin, then shower. You'll remove color to get a fresh start. **TO BUY:** \$33; sephora.com.

Find more sunless-tanning tips at realsimple.com/selftanner.

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Wallpaper 101

SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE, WALLPAPER GOT COOL AGAIN. AND—THANK GOODNESS—IT'S BECOME EASIER TO USE TOO. TIME TO EXPERIMENT.

By Jill Sieracki

PROP STYLING BY KATJA GREEFF. FALLBROOK WALLPAPER IN GREEN. \$148 FOR 49.5 SQ. FT.; SERENAANDLILY.COM

GORGEOUS WALLPAPERS are all over Instagram, but when most of us click “like” on those perfect pics, we believe they’re so beautiful that they’re far out of reach. You wouldn’t be alone if you thought a wallpaper project was too messy or expensive to DIY. And aligning those patterns or creating a straight line? Sounds like a chevron-print pipe dream. Luckily for you, companies are making pretty papers that are much more wallet friendly and accessible to DIYers. “If you can assemble Ikea furniture,” you can ace a peel-and-stick wallpaper project, says artist, author, and Jungalow blogger Justina Blakeney.

“It doesn’t have to be four full walls in a crazy print,” says Chasing Paper founder Elizabeth Rees. “Start with a small project that will give you confidence to try it again.” Some companies, including Chasing Paper, offer two-by-four-foot panels so you can work in smaller sections and buy smaller amounts if you’re using them in a narrow nook or utility space. They’re designed so each panel’s pattern will seamlessly blend into the next—helping you avoid the struggle to line up florals or stripes. Even high-end brands are making their products more user friendly. York Wallcoverings now offers Sure Strip, a water-activated adhesive that lets you slide the panels into alignment; then, if you add more water when you’re ready to redecorate, each piece will easily peel off.

Plan for Paper

Choosing wallpaper is all about personal preference. With the huge array of patterns, colors, and textures out there, pinning up sample squares can help you decide what works best before you commit to buying several rolls or sheets. “If you have to learn to love it,” says interior designer Janie Molster, “it’s probably not a good choice.”

If you’re new to wallpaper, consider using it on an accent wall or in a powder or laundry room—someplace you’re not spending the bulk of your time. A graphic print can have a big impact on a small space, so you’ll get a huge bang for your (literal and proverbial) buck. Alternatively, if you’re struggling with an open floor plan,

says Molster, wallpapering one section of the large space can help define distinct living areas. Add a few panels by your front door to establish an entryway or on the wall behind your dining table to create a visual boundary between your entertaining space and an open kitchen. If you would prefer to do a full room but are apprehensive about going too bold with pattern, opt for a subtly textured wall covering, such as grass cloth. It’s ultra-forgiving when it comes to nail holes too. When you remove a nail, says interior designer Jason Oliver Nixon, “just move the grass-cloth fiber over a little bit and it should hide the hole.”

If you love the current style of your room but want to kick up the character, look into wallpaper that’s the same shade as the room’s most dominant color. Paint companies like Farrow & Ball produce their wallpaper using the colors of their paints, so a transition from solid to patterned is simple.

Roll with It

Before you paper, assess the quality of your wall—bumpy surfaces are not recommended, as the texture can compromise the integrity of the pattern. But if you just have small cracks and holes from when you attempted a gallery wall, there’s no need to patch those. “Wallpaper is a great way of covering blemishes, marks, holes, and dings,” says Rees. Large cracks that could potentially let moisture seep in, however, should be repaired with spackle before papering.

If you have old wallpaper to remove first, score it with the Zinsser PaperTiger tool (\$7.50; homedepot.com), then coat the surface with the brand’s DIF Wallpaper Stripper (\$8.60; acehardware.com). Enzymes in the gel help remove stubborn wallpaper without the hassle of a steamer or the mess of a solution.

No matter what, give the wall a coat of primer so your wallpaper has a clean surface to hang from. Professional wallpaper hanger Mark Turner notes that primer is essential if you use wallpaper-stripper gel; otherwise, your new paper will fall right off.

Use a four-foot level to mark a straight horizontal edge at the top of the area you’re papering; that line will serve as your hanging guide. Don’t rely on the border between wall and ceiling, because it may not actually be level. Prep your paper by applying a glue or moistening it to activate the adhesive. Let it sit for a few minutes, then carry the strip to the wall. Line the top left corner of the strip along the horizontal line at the top left corner of your wall, smoothing as you go with your hand or a smoother tool (an old gift card will work in a pinch).

If your wallpaper is more like a mural than an unending pattern, start in the middle of the room, so your picture is centered on the wall, and work your way outward.

Use a sharp blade to trim any overages. Then post your handiwork on Instagram.

WALL OF FAME

Our design experts' go-to sources



CHASING PAPER

Removable wallpaper in graphic prints and multiple color combinations.

TO BUY: Waves wallpaper in navy, \$40 per 2-by-4-ft. panel; chasingpaper.com.



COLEFAX AND FOWLER

Classic offerings, from subtle stripes to traditional damask.

TO BUY: Piper wallpaper in stone; cowtan.com for info.



HYGGE & WEST

Pretty patterns from 16 designer collaborations.

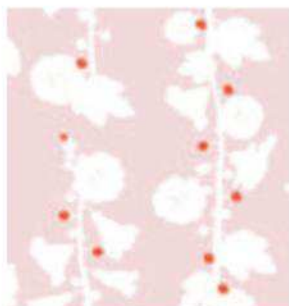
TO BUY: Rifle Paper Co. Rosa wallpaper in indigo, \$190 per roll; hyggeandwest.com.



LINDSAY COWLES

Large- and small-scale abstract prints.

TO BUY: Midnight wallpaper, \$370 per 10-ft. roll; lindsaycowles.store.



LULU AND GEORGIA

Modern motifs and traditional mural patterns from a range of popular designers.

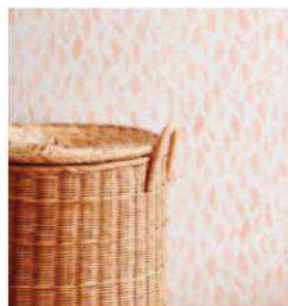
TO BUY: Hollyhock wallpaper by Clare V., \$136 per roll; luluandgeorgia.com.



PHILLIP JEFFRIES

Natural and textured wall coverings with a luxe look.

TO BUY: Soho Hemp wallpaper in Park Ave Plum; phillipjeffries.com for info.



REBECCA ATWOOD DESIGNS

Watercolor designs in a soothing color palette.

TO BUY: Petals in pink, \$340 per roll; rebeccaatwood.com.



SCHUMACHER

Whimsical and chinoiserie prints alongside grass-cloth offerings.

TO BUY: Chenonceau in sky, fschumacher.com for info.



SERENA & LILY

Bold prints in contrasting colors.

TO BUY: Palm wallpaper in black and white, \$98 per roll; serenaandlily.com.



SPOONFLOWER

Upload your own artwork, choose how it repeats, then have it printed in rolls.

TO BUY: Custom print; spoonflower.com for info.



THIBAUT

Traditional botanical, geometric, and toile designs.

TO BUY: Honshu in robin's egg, \$99 per roll; thibautdesign.com.



WALL SHOPPE

Fashion-forward styles available in peel-and-stick or paste-on applications.

TO BUY: Fiddle Fig in indigo, \$136 per roll; wallshoppe.com.

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Natural Wonders

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By Rebecca Daly

CLUTCHES

Textural, plant-based fibers make them casual enough to carry during the day, but their eye-catching embellishments—fringe, metallic threads, a polka dot print—are equally fitting for a summer evening.

TO BUY

(Clockwise from top)
Hat Attack Sunshine clutch, \$94; hatattack.com. Urban Expressions Dominica clutch, \$60; urbanexpressions.net. Mar y Sol Sofia clutch, \$29; shopmarysol.com.



CIRCLE BAGS

Whether you opt for a cross-body strap or a top handle, these round bags, adorned with pom-poms, are unexpected and so much fun.



TO BUY


(Clockwise from top)
Loeffler Randall Straw
Circle tote, \$295;
loefflerandall.com.
Brunna.co Surya
Water Hyacinth Straw
bag, \$98; brunna.co.
Stella & Dot Tilda
crossbody, \$79;
stelladot.com.

BASKET TOTES

Full of vintage appeal, these are also surprisingly practical, with protective drawstring linings and room to hold all the essentials (even a book!).

TO BUY

(Clockwise from top)
Kayu Lolita tote, \$145;
clubmonaco.com.
Aranaz Ella Bucket bag,
\$240; shopbop.com.
Indego Africa Mia
bag, \$75, and Raffia
Bag charm, \$24;
indegofafrica.org.

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Personal Shopper

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Why not let a pro scour the stores for you? This month a wardrobe-organizing wiz (and former swimsuit model) styles you for the beach.

▲ Brooklyn Decker

This multihyphenate started her career modeling for *Sports Illustrated* and *Vogue*. Now, as a busy mother of two, actress (you can catch her on Netflix's *Grace and Frankie*), and cofounder of Finery, a tech company that keeps your closet under (digital) control, she requires just as many wardrobe changes IRL. Follow @BrooklynDecker and @YourFinery.

For more of Brooklyn's beach-ready recs, visit realsimple.com/brooklyndecker.



Tori Prayer Swimwear Nadia Cover-Up

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TO BUY: \$129; toripraver.com.

Judy B. Swim Bo One-Piece

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TO BUY: \$149; judybswim.com.

Hat Attack Reversible Canvas Hat

"This hat reverses from stripes to a neutral cream color so you can pack light—it goes with every outfit."
TO BUY: \$55; hatattack.com.

ATP Atelier Astrid Slides

"Metallic flat sandals work as well by the water as they do with a beautiful dress for dinner."
TO BUY: \$168; atpatelier.com.

Cult Gaia Ark Bag

"Don't be fooled by its delicate appearance—this clutch is incredibly durable (and roomy!)."
TO BUY: \$168; cultgaia.com.

Toms Sawyer Sunglasses

"I love the company's give-back mission—buying these sunnies contributes to restoring sight for someone in need."
TO BUY: \$120; toms.com.

BROOKLYN DECKER PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF KRISTEN KILPATRICK PHOTOGRAPHY; HAT AND SWIMSUIT: PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN HENN, STYLING BY ALEX SILVA AT BA-REPS; PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS



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MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS
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RAISE KIDS WHO ARE SMART ABOUT MONEY

Talking about money isn't easy. Talking about money with your kids can be even more challenging. Should allowance be tied to chores? How do you make sure your child isn't spoiled? How do you deal with college debt? Whether your kids are 4 or 24, it's never too early—or too late—to help build financial confidence.

By Kathleen Murray Harris

Lego sculptures by David Haliski,
theworldinbricks.com

Photographs by Corey Olsen

PRESCHOOLERS & EARLY ELEMENTARY KIDS (7 AND UNDER)

The foundation of money habits is formed very early, as young as age 5, according to research from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. But don't let that send you into a panic; just start somewhere. "Learning financial skills is like learning to tie your shoes or play the clarinet—it takes practice," says Joline Godfrey, author of *Raising Financially Fit Kids*.

Communicate about money.

The easiest thing to do? Take the taboo out of money conversations and talk about it around your kids—but not in an "I'm so stressed about bills" way. Rather, share your excitement about a bargain or the fact that you've saved enough for a vacation. For kids ages 4 to 7, Godfrey says to focus on using money terms ("save," "share," "choose") and phrases about financial values ("Save for a rainy day," "Share with others"—and "Carpe diem" if you have funds set aside).

Involve them in your shopping.

When you say, "Wow, this is on sale for \$3!" it shows your child that you recognize the price, see the value, and are making a decision about whether to buy it, says Erica Sandberg, a consumer finance expert and the advice columnist for CreditCards.com. At checkout, have them buy something: Hand them cash to use (it's more tangible than credit) and get the change back. By talking to the person behind the counter and exchanging money—even if it's not their own—they'll start understanding that things cost money and becoming aware of personal responsibility for purchases.



Open a savings account.

Picking out a special piggy bank can build excitement about saving, says Jeannine Glista, cocreator and executive producer of *Biz Kid\$*, a TV series that teaches kids about money and business. "Saving money is fun for kids to do—encourage that," she says. When they receive a larger amount of money, take them to the bank to deposit it into a savings account. You could even deposit the same amount into your own account to show them you're saving along with them.

Play games.

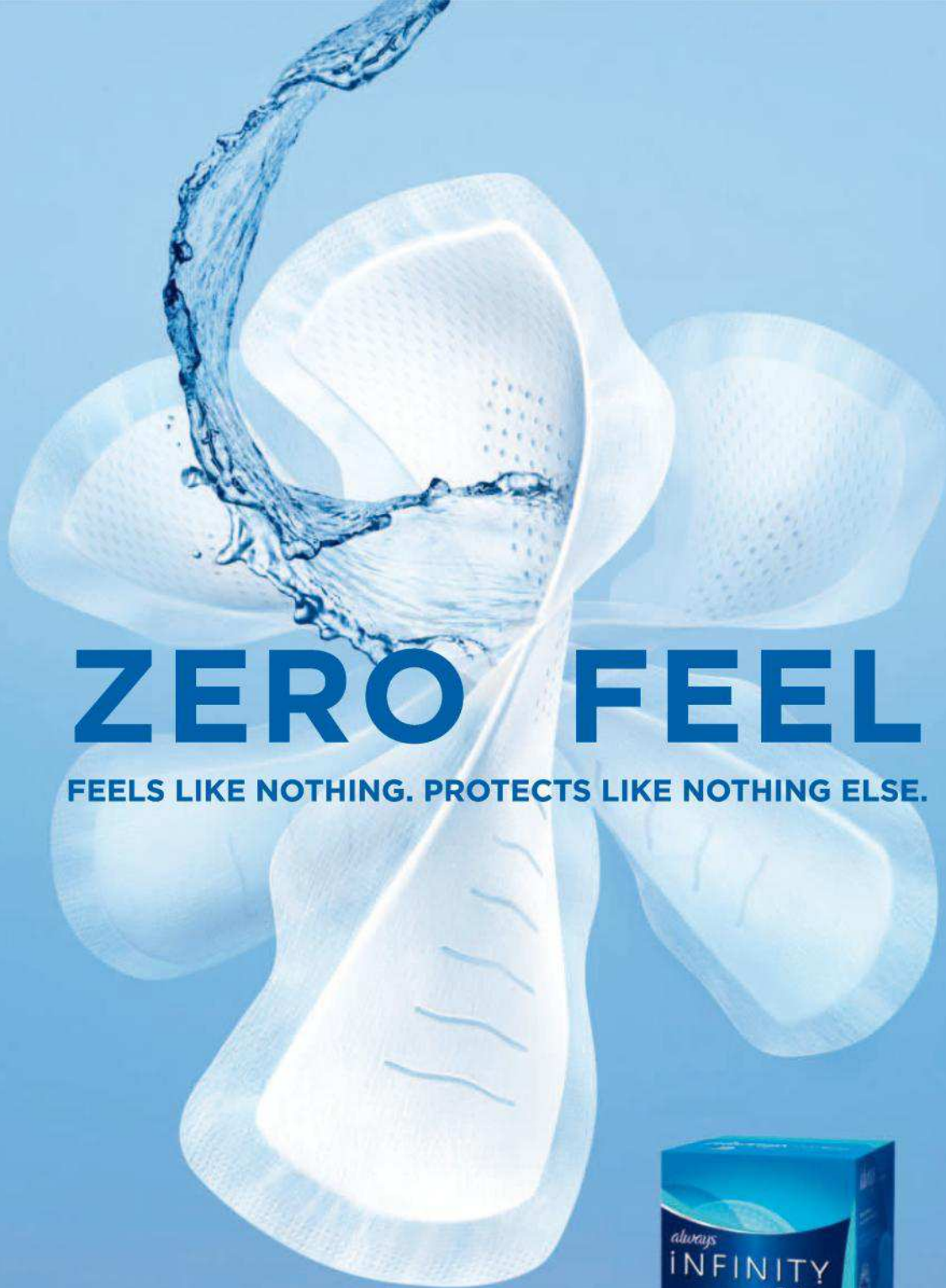
Simple math games, like those in the app series by Duck Duck Moose (free; Android, iOS), help younger kids get comfortable with numbers. *Biz Kid\$*, the educational initiative associated with the TV series, offers several interactive games on its site; *Bringing Home the Bacon* helps kids identify wants and needs, says Glista. Or let them play with a calculator. Have them add up the price of everything they want in a catalog or at the grocery store. Seeing the total will help them realize how much they need to save for big items.

OLDER ELEMENTARY KIDS & TEENS (8–12)

Children can now begin earning money, which is empowering, says Glista. They'll start to develop money personalities—even at this age, there are spenders and savers.

Brainstorm ways to earn.

"Kids don't really start paying attention to how to manage money until they're making it themselves," says Glista. Encourage them to think about their passions or talents and how they can translate them into a business. If your child loves dogs, can she walk your neighbors'? If she likes crafts, can she make and sell slime? Have them create a business plan by researching how much to charge. If it's a service, they can look at local flyers or ask neighbors what they'd pay for a dog walker or lawn mower. If it's a product, help them add up the cost of the supplies and calculate what retail price will earn a profit.



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Talk about spending choices.

Yes, it is fun to see those dollar bills pile up, but what are they going to do with them? Buy a new video game? Splurge on candy? Discuss whether it's a good idea to spend all the money on, say, chocolate—but without criticism. At this age, says Godfrey, “the positive reinforcement of good choices is more important than the punishment of bad ones.” You can also begin to teach the concept of indulgence versus need, says Sandberg: “If you're at the drugstore and your son asks to buy a toy, and it wasn't your intention to buy it, say, ‘OK, but I'm going to take that money from your savings.’ That's a powerful thing.”

Be positive about your job.

There are days when you just don't want to go to work—or your kids complain that you have to go to the office again. As natural as it is to gripe, make the concept of a job exciting. You want kids to feel enthusiastic (not greedy) about the idea of making money, says Glista. You'll create guilt-free associations with work and what it allows you to do.

Model philanthropic behavior.

The next time your local zoo or public library hosts a benefit, take your kids and have them see you write a check. “Kids will copy what they grow up watching,” says Godfrey. You can give your children more control over their money decisions when they're this age. Let them choose a charity and an amount they'll donate to that organization on a monthly or annual basis. It could be \$1 or \$10—“It's more important that your child gains self-confidence and a realization that they're doing this themselves,” says Godfrey.

TEENS & COLLEGE-BOUND KIDS (13+)

This is an appropriate stage to begin involving your child in your family's financial situation, especially once college becomes a closer reality. At the dinner table, talk about credit scores and what it takes to apply for financial aid. Education is power.

Track dollars.

There are several budget, saving, and investing apps that let kids clearly see where their money goes, says James Nichols, senior vice president of Voya Financials Customer Solutions Group. His pick: Current (\$36 a year; iOS and Android). The app, which is synced with a debit card, features spending, saving, and giving “wallets.” Parents can set up notifications and make direct deposits as well. Or have kids keep a record of every penny they spend over a period of time. “Then evaluate the information together so they see where their money goes,” says Godfrey. As for credit cards, experts say teens shouldn't get one until they have a regular source of income and can make payments. “Otherwise, the risk is too high for not being able to pay it off on a timely basis,” says Glista.

Play “What If?”

Discuss tricky money situations and how to handle them. For example, ask: Who pays on dates? How do you decide? What if your date's family has more money than ours? Or vice versa? “This begins to be an issue early—and in high school it is one of the last taboo topics for families,” says Godfrey. While there is no one right answer, by sharing your thoughts, you'll better prepare your kids for the situation.

YOUR GUIDE TO GIVING AN ALLOWANCE

WHEN DO YOU START?

Wait until you feel your child is mature enough to grasp the concepts of saving and spending, most likely around age 4.

HOW MUCH DO YOU GIVE?

Some experts recommend giving \$1 monthly for every year old (e.g., \$5 a month for a 5-year-old), but only if it makes financial sense for your family. Otherwise, decide on your annual allowance budget per child, then figure out the frequency. Consistency is key.

HOW SHOULD YOU GIVE IT?


Ron Lieber, author of *The Opposite of Spoiled*, popularized the three-jar approach, in which kids split up allowance into pools: one for spending, one for saving, one for giving. It's a good starter path for younger children. But older kids have cash flow issues just like grown-ups, says Godfrey—maybe one month they have multiple friends' birthdays. Consider giving a lump sum for, say, six months to cover expenses you've decided are their responsibility. Encourage them to budget it with saving and giving in mind too.

SHOULD YOU LINK ALLOWANCE WITH CHORES?

In a word, no. Most experts agree that tasks like making the bed and clearing the table should be expected, not rewarded. Kids might earn money for “bonus chores” that go above and beyond the norm, like babysitting or helping with a big yard project.

WHAT ABOUT WITH GRADES?

Nope. “An allowance is a tool for practicing financial skills—not a salary,” says Godfrey.

 For four money topics you shouldn't discuss with kids, go to realsimple.com/kidsandmoney.

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RELATING

Introduce them to investing.

Sites like Yahoo Finance let you create a mock portfolio. Help your child choose a few stocks and watch the ticker go up and down. They'll see how the stocks perform over time and begin to understand the basics and volatility of the market, says Nichols. Encourage them to think of investing as a subset of saving.

Discuss how you're going to pay for college.

Kids at this age are about to leap into full independence, so empower them to take charge of financial tasks. They should manage college applications and fill out their own Free Application for Federal Student Aid

(FAFSA), says Godfrey. If your family doesn't have enough resources to cover college, involve them in your problem-solving, says Glista. Consider bringing your child to a meeting with your financial planner. "Kids aren't always aware of the financial impact college has on their parents; having a professional in the room can provide objectivity and take the emotion out of it," says Nichols. Discuss how much you'll need in loans and how that will translate into monthly payments. And before you take out a loan, have a repayment plan. Will your child be responsible? Will you split the bills? "No one wants to graduate and be faced with huge sticker shock," says Nichols.





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FROM WHAT TO STORE IN YOUR GO BAG TO WHICH APPS CAN GET YOU OUT OF A STICKY SPOT, THIS INFO WILL READY YOU FOR LIFE'S UNEXPECTED (AND, FINGERS CROSSED, RARE) DISASTERS.

By Tamara Kraus

Where to Begin

KNOW YOUR RISKS

Research which natural disasters are likely to occur in your region (such as flooding, hurricanes, or earthquakes) and check with your insurance company to find out what kind of coverage is recommended for your area.

SIGN UP FOR ALERTS

Your local emergency management organization, news station, and municipal departments may provide text alerts or push notifications to keep you updated.

GATHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Create a list of core family members' phone numbers, birth dates, social security numbers, and medical needs in case your mobile device fails. Note your household members' frequent locations (work, day-care, school) and their addresses, phone numbers, and evacuation routes.

TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBORS

Reach out to the people around you (or use a social network like Nextdoor) to see if anyone will need an extra hand in an emergency—such as elderly neighbors or those with special needs or small children. Determine who will check on them during a disaster. If you live in an apartment building, ask your landlord or neighbors about plans to keep one another informed and safe if there's a fire, power outage, or gas leak.

How to Make Your Plan

WRITE IT DOWN

Once you've done your research, compile a document. Include contact information for everyone in your household, at least four neighbors, one out-of-town person (if local phone lines are congested, it may be easier to reach someone outside the area), and emergency service providers. Establish four meeting places: an indoor spot, like a windowless room, if you live in an area with tornadoes or high-wind storms; a neighborhood location, such as a big tree, in case of a fire; a community center in case you can't get back home; and an out-of-town place, like a friend's home, in case you have to evacuate the area.

SAFEGUARD IT

Store a hard copy of your plan in a central location in your home, like in a kitchen drawer or on the fridge. Everyone in your home should keep a copy in their everyday bag, as well as a small contact card in their wallet, because a cellphone won't always be reliable during an emergency. Digitize your plan (plus other legal documents, such as insurance and medical records) and store them on a cloud service, like Google Docs, in case hard copies get lost. Email your plan to a few close neighbors and friends, an out-of-state family member, and anyone else who would want to locate you.

PRACTICE IT

Review your plan once a year and update it whenever information changes. Do a test run: Ensure small children know how to call 911, have every family member text your out-of-town contact, and discuss what info to send via text and how to say it concisely in a time crunch. You can reach people more quickly via text because it doesn't clog up critical bandwidth like a call does.

What to Store

THE CONTAINERS

Purchase a customizable kit (like The Earthquake Bag, from \$40; earthquakebag.com) or build your own using a durable backpack or duffel bag with wheels. Store food separately in a large, clear plastic container. Keep it in a cool, dry spot near an exit in your home for easy access.

FOOD AND WATER

Set aside at least three days' worth of non-perishable food and water for the people in your household and five days' worth for your pet. Crackers, dried fruit, and powdered milk should be replaced every six months; replace canned meat and fruit and ready-to-eat cereals within a year. Items like dry pasta and white rice can be kept virtually indefinitely. Store commercially bottled water—one gallon per person, per day—in the original sealed containers. If you're ever unsure about the quality of tap water, bringing it to a rolling boil for one minute will kill most microorganisms. Before boiling, let particles settle to the bottom, then strain the water through layers of paper towels or a coffee filter.

HEALTH ITEMS

Stash medical supplies, like spare eyeglasses, contact lenses, copies of prescriptions (so you can get more at the pharmacy), and extra bottles of medicine in your bag.

COMFORT ITEMS

Have your kids' favorite board games, stuffed animals, and blankets on hand, as well as your pet's go-to toy and crate and an old phone loaded with games or movies.

DEVICES AND CASH

A crank-operated radio, a solar-powered flashlight, electronics chargers, and a jump starter for your car are essential. Store some cash in your bag as well, and download an app like Venmo to transfer money quickly.

HELPFUL APPS

Experts suggest downloading these now so you can get info on the fly later. Some of them offer documents you can save on your phone ahead of time in case cell service isn't available when you need it.

American Red Cross

Handle the most common medical emergencies with the virtual first aid kit.

FEMA

Locate open shelters nearby, save a list of meet-up spots, and receive weather alerts.

Waze

Navigate the fastest travel route in the event of an evacuation.

GasBuddy

Scout out the closest gas station when you're in a rush.

ASPCA

Store your pet's medical records digitally in case you need to put him in an emergency shelter.

WhatsApp

Message groups of people with a variety of mobile devices.

OUR EXPERTS

JOIE ACOSTA, PHD, SENIOR BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST AT THE RAND CORPORATION IN SANTA MONICA

DICK GREEN, EDD, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF ASPCA DISASTER RESPONSE

IRWIN REDLENER, MD, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY'S EARTH INSTITUTE

JONATHAN SURY, MPH, PROJECT DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND FIELD OPERATIONS AT THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY'S EARTH INSTITUTE

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What's Selling at the Pet Store?

AT COLORADO'S REPUBLIC OF PAWS, EVERYONE IS TREATED LIKE FAMILY.

By Tamara Kraus

Husband and wife Jason and Molly Smith have fostered about 20 rescue dogs and have two of their own pups (one is a rescue), so it was no surprise when they decided to open Republic of Paws in Colorado Springs. The couple's mission to support rescue shelters while selling healthy products—largely from independent, local companies—has helped them develop a loyal customer base. In 2013, they opened their second location, in Denver, and three years later, they expanded into grooming (they groom foster dogs for free). The stores are known in the communities as funky yet practical shopping environments where the Smiths and their employees know their furry customers by name. Molly walked us through the couple's favorite finds, all available at republicofpaws.com.

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Good Read

In Defense of Teenagers

ELISABETH EGAN ALWAYS ROLLED HER EYES AT ADOLESCENTS. BUT RAISING TEENS OF HER OWN WOULD CHANGE HOW SHE SAW THEM.

ON OUR FIRST NIGHT in the house where we live now, I was tucking my son into bed when I heard a jarring noise coming from across the street. *Roll scrape. Roll scrape.* Peeking out the window, I spotted a group of kids skateboarding down the walkway of the school on our corner. The sound was their wheels on the concrete path, then the drag of the back end of their boards on the road.

Roll scrape. Roll scrape. I felt it in the soles of my feet.

My son popped his head up from the pillow. He was 3, his cheeks still as pinch-worthy as ripe peaches. "What's that?" "Just some annoying teenagers."



After I confronted the skaters on my street, my husband broke it to me gently: “You know we’re going to have our own teenagers soon, right?”

THE TEENAGERS CAME BACK the next night, and the one after that, often lingering at the school until well after dark. Mostly they hung around in front, where the pavement was fresh, but sometimes they migrated to the playground, where their colorful conversations echoed off the blacktop and over to our porch. In the morning, we’d find tangled swings or a pyramid of Red Bull cans carefully balanced at the top of the slide. Before long, even my kids rolled their eyes. “Ugh,” they’d say. “Teenagers.”

Sometimes I’d march across the street and confront the skaters. I’d point to a sign on the side of the school, the one that said, simply, Skateboarding. (Some clever ruffian had inked over the No.) I’d say, “Guys, you’re really not supposed to be here. Don’t you have something better to do?”

Usually, the kids would just tuck their boards under their arms and disperse with the air of lambs being prodded along by an annoying collie. But a few times they stood their ground. One boy planted his Vans shoulder-width apart, crossed his arms over his chest, and said, “Ma’am, we’re just kids. We’re not bothering anyone.”

I said, “You’re not kids. You’re teenagers.”

Back inside, my husband broke it to me gently: “You know we’re going to have our own teenagers soon, right?”

ONE BY ONE, our three kids started to grow up. They migrated to the front seat of the car. They stopped talking when we entered a room. They closed the bathroom door and leaned into the open refrigerator, their faces magnificent in the glow, declaring, “We have nothing to eat.” At some point, I stopped buying string cheese and started buying ramen. That was when I knew what was coming.

One afternoon last fall, I looked out the kitchen window and saw our 14-year-old gliding gracefully down the front

walkway of the school on a skateboard he’d bought with his own money. *Roll scrape.* When he reached the bottom, he picked up his board, walked back up the little slope to the red door, and did it all over again. *Roll scrape.*

And again. *Roll scrape.*

He crouched low like a surfer—one arm in front, one in back, his mouth a serious line, eyes narrow beneath a gray knit cap. He’d been practicing for weeks in the backyard, then in the driveway, and now here he was, taking a wild airborne leap in front of the whole neighborhood. The noise was the same as ever—hair-raising—but the look on my son’s face made the racket bearable, even beautiful.

As I watched, I flashed back to a time when the kids were younger and I corralled them all on the front steps to snap a picture, one of hundreds I took in that exact spot. Back then, it was hard to get a decent shot of all three—someone was always complaining or pinching someone else. Plus, it was the early days of digital photography, so there was a delay between when I pressed the button and when the shutter captured the image. I delivered my usual line—“Say cheese”—and then the girls ran off to strap the new puppy into their doll stroller.

Only my son remained on the porch, brow furrowed. He asked, “Mommy? Is there an actual cheese?”

“What are you talking about?” We needed milk, wipes, and dish soap. Did we need cheese too? My older daughter needed a haircut. My younger daughter needed new shoes. My brain broadcast this endless loop of parents with small kids, making it hard to pay attention to the one standing in front of me. He couldn’t have been more than 5.

“I mean, you always tell us to say cheese. Is there an actual cheese?”

I tried to explain—“It’s just a word that makes you smile”—but for the rest of the afternoon, he hit me with philosophical questions above my pay grade: “But why cheese? Why does everybody say it?”

Later, when I looked at the pictures, I saw that the delay had captured a certain look on my son’s face—one I see now when he’s skateboarding. There’s that same concentration and focus, that same purse of lips and flash of blue eyes. It’s the face of a kid trying to figure something out.

Just some annoying teenagers. How I wish I could take that back. Grab that woman by the shoulders and whisper the golden rule of parenting in her ear: Never say never.

THERE ARE SO MANY less productive things a teenager could be doing than playing outside, perfecting kick flips and ollies. (Sorry, *hanging out*. Not playing.) He could be glued to his phone, or he could just be heating up yet another frozen pizza whose petrified sausage flecks will take on a life of their own on the floor of the toaster oven.

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Now, instead of seeing a nuisance across the street, I see a kid with pink cheeks and bright eyes. I see a kid who's maddeningly monosyllabic and cuttingly funny, one who drives me to the brink with his study habits ("The whole class failed! I swear!"), then reels me back in with his curiosity about current events, movies, music, sushi, Korean barbecue, and, of course, sneakers. (Always sneakers.) Where I used to see a troublemaker loitering on public property, I now see a kid who outgrew soccer and is branching out into something new. I see a kid who added Clearasil to the shopping list, then pretended not to know who it was for, a kid whose legs are too long for boys' jeans but whose waist is too narrow for men's.

I thought I understood teenagers, having already been partway around the block with my older daughter, who is 17. She was a screamer in middle school, a textbook adolescent. We'd yell at each other, and then the air would clear and she'd ask me to test her on Spanish vocabulary. *Saltar*, to jump. *Volar*, to fly. *Dejar*, to leave. But my son would rather not step into the ring. He doesn't raise his voice—he just won't engage, apologize, or do whatever it is you want him to do. He's intractable, which can be infuriating in its own way. The only thing our older two kids have in common is their need for space, and lots of it. They prefer my husband and me to be seen and not heard. But these lanky, moody, heavily backpacked teenagers are still my people, and I love being in their orbit whether or not they want to be in mine. Plus, they have decent taste in movies, and they give me an excuse to buy Cinnamon Toast Crunch cereal.

Here's what I wish I'd known back in the days when I was huffing and puffing across the street to yell at someone else's son, and here's what I want people to know about mine: He is not the enemy. Fourteen-year-olds are still kids; the skateboarder who stood up to me was right about that. My son may not charm you—in fact, in his own silent, sullen way, he's likely to do the opposite—but he has feelings. And, thanks to me, he knows what people think of boys his age. He won't make much of an effort to prove me (or you) wrong. His charm lies in his predictability and his insistence on getting answers to the question you never thought to ask. (Come to think of it, maybe there should be an actual cheese.)

These days, when I look across the street at a new generation of skateboarders, I don't hear the terrible scrape anymore or see a pack of loud delinquents. Instead I see my boy, nimble as a ballerina, soaking up fresh air and freedom, landing on his feet. My job here isn't done, nor is the fun part of parenthood over. If the toddler years were the physical game, this is the mental one. And so I wait, I watch, and I hope. To jump, to fly. I thought I understood these words before; now I'm learning them all over again. The leaving will come later.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elisabeth Egan is the books editor at *Glamour* and the author of the novel *A Window Opens*. She lives in New Jersey with her family.

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L.D. ASKS...

My husband and I have three children and live about 20 minutes from my in-laws. They will often pick up our kids from school and go on adventures, which is great. But when I text to ask about dinner or timing, my text goes unanswered. Or they will offer (generously!) to take the kids to the zoo. We will have them ready at, say, 10 a.m., but the in-laws will not show up until 2 p.m., despite our attempts to reach them. How can you tell people doing you a favor that you'd appreciate their being on time?

I'm sure your unhurried in-laws are lovely company for your kids, but their relationship to time sounds at least occasionally maddening. You can't change their behavior, but you can change the way you communicate about it. Try to kindly let them know why it's an issue: "Thank you for taking the children! Can you please call us when you're on your way over? It's hard for the kids when they don't know how long they'll be waiting." You might also try to plan so that you drop the kids off, at which point you can ask, "What time do you think you'll bring them home? They're so excited, but we're juggling a lot, and it would help to know when to expect them." As your kids get older, they will be able to help too: They'll have phones, or they can watch the clock and cue the grandparents to tell you if they're running late. In other words, this too shall pass.



E.S. ASKS...

A couple recently moved to our town and invited us to dinner. They cooked a delicious meal, and we brought wine and bread. Afterward, they casually said they would Venmo us for the groceries they'd bought. We felt this was unfair—it was not discussed beforehand. How do we handle this awkward situation?



ABOUT CATHERINE

The author of *One Mixed-Up Night*, *Catastrophic Happiness*, and *Waiting for Birdy*, Catherine Newman has shared her wisdom on matters ranging from family and friends to happiness and pickling in numerous publications. She gets advice from her husband and two opinionated children in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Did this couple move to your town from a different planet? Am I old-fashioned to think that hosting means you, you know, host? Were you supposed to bill them for the chianti and baguette? These are just some of the questions I'm left with. I confess to being depressed by the situation, though I'm the kind of person who would rather be served toast and eggs with gracious warmth than a fancy meal with a cold request for cost sharing. You're right: They should have alerted you about their expectations. But the thing to do now is pay your way and move on. If you like, you can invite them over without sending a bill afterward, to show them another style of hosting. Or you can decide that this ultramodern friendship is not for you.

C.G. ASKS...

My daughter was a debutante for the June 2016 party season and wrote thank-you notes to all the hostesses who honored her with a party. I was cleaning out closets recently and came across many (35-plus) notes written and addressed but never mailed! Should I mail these original cards with a note explaining what happened? I am absolutely horrified that these kind people never received them.

I am trying to wrap my head around a party season that requires the writing of more than 35 thank-you notes! But your actual question is an easy one. Yes, you should do just as you suggest above. Pop a little note in with the cards—or, better yet, have your daughter do it: “In the blur of excitement I seem to have forgotten to put this in the mail! Forgive me. And please accept my belated thanks for your kindness and generosity.” If you think the closeted notes are part of a bigger picture of forgetfulness, you can talk to your daughter about dotting her i’s and crossing her t’s. Otherwise, just mail the cards out now and share a laugh.

HAVE AN ETIQUETTE QUESTION?

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WORK, MONEY, AND HEALTH
ADVICE FOR BUSY PEOPLE

balance

A vibrant collage of fresh green ingredients including cucumber ribbons, lime slices, grapes, broccoli, lettuce, and pea pods. The ingredients are arranged in a dynamic, overlapping composition against a white background.

THE “CLEAN EATING” RULES TO FOLLOW— AND BREAK

Not-so-good news: Eating clean isn't as great as we've been led to believe. Still, the trend does contain some nutritional pearls of wisdom. We separate the smart stuff from the pseudoscience.

By Juno DeMelo

FOOD STYLING BY MICHELLE GATTON

IF YOU'VE JUST ABOUT had it with diets—the complicated guidelines, the weird and expensive packaged foods, the quit-and-try-again cycle—the clean eating movement of the past several years may seem like a green, glowing, Gwyneth-worthy breath of fresh air. But the strange thing is, it's difficult to agree on exactly what it means. Many common clean eating rules, like consuming more vegetables, seem smart, but some people's ideas about clean eating are actually unhealthy or bogus (no, you don't need a juice cleanse to keep your liver working well, and processed food isn't slowly killing you). And make no mistake: Clean eating is still a diet, even if it comes in prettier packaging. If you fall off the wagon and eat something "dirty," you're right back where you started, feeling terrible about the way you eat.

Still, there are many tenets of the "clean" lifestyle that almost every expert can agree are great for you. Read on for a few elements of your diet that might benefit from a little cleanup—and some you might want to leave alone.

GO AHEAD AND...

Cut back on sugar.

Though the American Heart Association recommends women get no more than 25 grams (or 6 teaspoons) of added sugar a day, the average American consumes more than 70 grams. The problem: Excess sugar is linked to metabolic syndrome, a cluster of symptoms (including obesity and high blood pressure) that can raise your risk for diabetes and heart disease.

Luckily, you don't have to scour nutrition facts on everything you eat to uncover hidden sugar. "The added sugar in foods like ketchup and pasta sauce isn't a big deal," says Joan Salge Blake, EdD, RDN, clinical associate professor of nutrition at Boston University. Instead, focus on big-ticket items, like desserts and sugary beverages. And remain wary of less refined sweeteners, such as those

made with honey and agave. These healthier-sounding sugars are popular with some in the clean eating camp, but they still count as added sugar, and you shouldn't be eating too much of them.

Eat more vegetables.

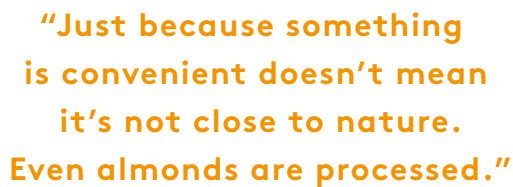
In a perfect world, you'd consume 2½ cups of vegetables a day. But just 9 percent of us meet that goal, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Why is that bad? Seven of the top 10 leading causes of death in the U.S. are chronic diseases—and a diet rich in veggies, which contain fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, can help lower the risk of many of them, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain kinds of cancer. "If you eat vegetables at lunch, for a snack, and at dinner, you'll likely nail the recommendation," says Blake. Salads and veggie sides are obvious choices, but vegetable soup, salsa, and crudité with dip will help you meet your quota as well.

Choose whole grains.

They deliver fiber, B vitamins, and minerals and are linked to a reduced risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Refined grains, like white rice and white flour, lose half to two-thirds of their nutrients during the refining process. The least processed grains you can buy are those in their whole form, like farro, barley, and quinoa. Next best are products made with whole-grain flour, like pasta and bread.

Read labels.

You're looking for three main indicators of how nutritious your food is, with some exceptions. First, the ingredients list should be relatively short (something like veggie lasagna will have more ingredients than roasted nuts, which is fine) and made up of things you generally recognize. Second, the first three ingredients ideally won't be sugar or any of its pseudonyms, such as evaporated cane juice or fructose (unless it's a dessert). Finally, says Blake, "if the first ingredient is a grain, it should say 'whole' in front of it." Look at fat, fiber, and protein if you have orders from a doctor or dietitian to do so, but otherwise don't worry about them too much. And know that occasionally eating processed stuff that veers wildly from these guidelines won't harm your health, says Stephanie Clarke, RD, cofounder of C&J Nutrition in New York City. "If you love Cheetos, feel free to eat them once in a while."



Avoid all processed foods.

Detox.

Yes, toxins exist—mostly in pesticide residue, charred meat, and large quantities of alcohol—but they aren't invading every nook and cranny of your fridge. And unless you've somehow ingested so many toxins that you've landed in the ER, your liver and kidneys will excrete them on their own, no help or fasting required. "Your body is very efficient at taking the nutrients it needs from foods and getting rid of the rest," says Blake. "If you really want to clean your GI tract, you need more whole grains, fruit, and vegetables, not less food."

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think you might have an allergy or intolerance, see a board-certified allergist, gastroenterologist, or registered dietitian. Otherwise, elimination diets can create nutritional gaps and even bring you more gastrointestinal distress.

Fear food that's conventionally grown.

Many food-label claims, such as “natural,” aren’t regulated by the USDA. And even the ones that are, such as “organic,” don’t promise clear-cut benefits. “Organic systems use fewer pesticides, which is good for human health and the health of the planet, but they also have lower yields, which means you need more natural resources to produce the same amount of food,” says Tim Griffin, PhD, director of the Agriculture, Food and Environment program at Tufts University. If you do choose organic, Clarke advises focusing on produce. Strawberries, spinach, stone fruit, apples, grapes, and pears tend to contain the most pesticide residue. But if organic food isn’t in the budget, it’s OK. You should still eat plenty of produce, even if it’s conventional.

A CLEAN TABLE AND A CLEAR MIND

While the value of a clean eating–style diet may be debatable, a cleaner, more mindful approach to your meals is a win. “Paying attention to taste, texture, and smell can maximize the pleasure you get out of food,” says Kronberg. And studies show it could also offer many of the benefits associated with clean eating: helping lower your blood sugar, improving your digestion, and making it easier to lose weight. Sit down at the table (cleared of bills and folded laundry), not in front of the TV or your laptop. Then slow the pace by taking small bites, setting down your fork or taking a sip of water between each, and chewing thoroughly.



Be overly rigid.

Declaring something off-limits can also make it more tempting—and lead to guilt when you inevitably “cheat” by eating something that isn’t “clean.” “Calling something ‘dirty’ has profound implications, especially for people prone to troubled relationships with food, who believe if they eat something unclean, they’ll become that way themselves,” says biochemist turned professional chef Anthony Warner, author of *The Angry Chef’s Guide to Spotting Bullsh*t in the World of Food*. Plus, the stress of avoiding supposedly dirty foods kind of sucks the joy out of breaking bread. “The point of eating healthy is to support your

aliveness, not encroach on it,” says Sondra Kronberg, RD, executive director of the Eating Disorder Treatment Collaborative in Jericho, New York.

Instead of demonizing foods (and lamenting their exile), recognize that all foods have value, whether they deliver the perfect mix of macronutrients, remind you of your childhood, or just taste delicious. Eat what makes you feel happy and healthy, and tune in to your body so you’ll stop when you’ve had enough. “Yes, food is fuel,” says Kronberg, “but it also gives us pleasure and brings us together around the table. Rigid beliefs create anxiety and can suppress your internal hunger cues, making it difficult to eat in a relaxed way that meets your physical, emotional, and social needs.”

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Have Books, Will Travel

Some of our best reading is done on vacation. But with only so much suitcase space, it can be hard to narrow down a manageable to-be-read pile. For inspiration, we asked seven authors—all with their own new releases out in time for summer trips—to tell us where they're traveling and what books they're packing. Enjoy your break!



LAUREN GROFF'S

Woodland Retreat

When Florida's heat becomes unbearable, my family drives up the East Coast to New Hampshire, where we've renovated a little barn by my parents' pond. It's a deeply happy place, full of dogs and chickens and apple trees and endless forests for my little boys to play in.

Groff's just-released story collection, *Florida*, delves into the state's people, climates, and animals.



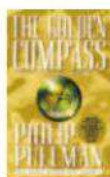
FEEL FREE BY ZADIE SMITH

Our barn has no Wi-Fi or cell service, and, as there are hours of sunlight left after my boys fall asleep, I average a book a night in the summer. I love Smith's ecstatic, leaping brain, and I count on her new essay collection to keep me in wise company one night.



OCEANIC BY AIMEE NEZHUKUMATATHIL

Some poets seem built for the blue-gray of winter, and some are best in heat and light. Nezhukumatathil is a summer poet to me, and you'll find me reading her newest collection with a glass of wine in an Adirondack chair.



THE GOLDEN COMPASS BY PHILIP PULLMAN

The trick to making long drives seem short is finding an audiobook we'll all love. I'm eyeing *The Golden Compass*, which is not only beautifully written enough to keep my attention but also adventurous enough for my little boys.

LILLIAN LI'S

Lakeside Escape

This summer, I'll be in Leland, a beautiful part of Michigan that runs between lakes Michigan and Leelanau. With not one but two bodies of water, you can bet I'll be spending all day on the beach—plastic cooler stuffed with drinks and pasta salad.

Li's debut, *Number One Chinese Restaurant*, is a multi-generational novel about work and family.



BOOTSTRAPPER BY MARDI JO LINK

I love reading about hard work when I'm relaxing. In her memoir, Link overcomes the challenges of running a farm by herself: unruly farm animals, looming debt, and something called thunder-snow. She's buoyed by the love of her three sons and her dream of living off the land.



LITTLE LABORS BY RIVKA GALCHEN

Sometimes the best books for the lake aren't juicy thrillers but slim little volumes that make you reflect. Galchen's pocket-size book of essays on new motherhood is the latter. The essays, some only a sentence long, are playful, intelligent, and dense with wonder and love.



WHAT WE WERE PROMISED BY LUCY TAN

Tan's debut (out July 10) leaps across time and space, traveling from a silk-producing village in rural China to American suburbs. It'll be refreshing to read about love triangles and the crowds of Shanghai while a lake breeze ruffles my pages.



RACHEL KUSHNER'S

French Holiday

I go to France with my family every summer. My son is bilingual and attends a French summer camp. My husband used to live in Paris. Together, we've learned a lot about the Vézère Valley, where we spend much of our time. It's a beautiful rural place, with a meandering river with incredible castles on its banks and paths and rock carvings in the cliffs that date back thousands of years.

***The Mars Room*, from two-time National Book Award finalist Kushner, follows a woman starting two life sentences in prison.**



TRANSIT BY RACHEL CUSK

I'm reading *Outline*, the first novel in Cusk's trilogy, now, and it is making me feel I'm already on vacation, albeit a vacation of her wonderfully articulate melancholy and alienation. I'm eager to read the next one, *Transit*.



THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO BY ALEXANDRE DUMAS

My husband, son, and I plan to read this classic adventure novel together, partly because we're regular visitors to Marseilles, where you can see the fortress in which the main character is imprisoned. (Then, I think, he escapes? I guess I'll find out.)



MY COUSIN RACHEL BY DAPHNE DU MAURIER

Because every vacation should include one of her books, which are limpid and smart but somehow require very little of a reader. They're engrossing, like a classic summer read should be, regardless of where you are and who you're with.

For more selections from these authors, visit realsimple.com/summerbooks.



JESSICA KNOLL'S

Beach House Break

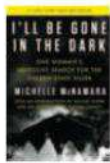
I'm from the East Coast, and I moved out to California a year and a half ago. Santa Barbara is a great weekend spot. So for Memorial Day weekend, my husband and I rented a house in Montecito, in Santa Barbara County, and invited a bunch of our East Coast friends to spend the long weekend with us.

Knoll's latest thriller, *The Favorite Sister*, is a whodunit about two sisters on a reality TV competition.



TANGERINE BY CHRISTINE MANGAN

This book, set in Morocco in the 1950s, follows two college roommates in the years following a horrible event they want to forget. It's been compared to *The Secret History* by Donna Tartt, a book I would take to a deserted island.



I'LL BE GONE IN THE DARK BY MICHELLE MCNAMARA

McNamara, the late crime writer, coined the moniker the Golden State Killer. This book is the product of her research into his crimes. She wrote with so much passion and so much humanity.



PACHINKO BY MIN JIN LEE

This book was in my to-be-read pile for a while. *Pachinko* is a moving novel that follows four generations of a Korean family through Japanese colonization. Even though it's long, it's engrossing and really satisfying.



BEATRIZ WILLIAMS'S

West Coast Road Trip

I was raised on the West Coast, so we try to road-trip there every so often. The plan is to fly into Denver and spend a few days with my aunt and uncle, then rent a minivan with our four kids—hopefully it's got a DVD player—and head through southern Wyoming to Utah, Nevada, and the Bay Area. After that we'll go north to Ashland, Oregon, where I took family vacations as a kid.

Williams's upcoming historical novel, *The Summer Wives* (out July 10), explores love and class on a small New England island.



YOU THINK IT, I'LL SAY IT BY CURTIS SITTENFELD

Last summer, I binge-read all of Sittenfeld's books. She brilliantly captures the experience of being a newcomer in a complex social system. So I'm excited to read her new short stories.



MASTER & COMMANDER BY PATRICK O'BRIAN

O'Brian's Aubrey-Maturin series is set in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic wars. He re-creates this world effortlessly. They're literary but also compulsively readable.



CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE BY TOMI ADEYEMI

I got this for my 15-year-old daughter. Once I gave it to her, I heard all this buzz about it, so I'm going to read it. It's based on West African myth and magic. It's all about women taking charge.

peek-a-boo,
look what's
new!

BALANCE



ADRIENNE CELT'S

Artsy Desert Camp

Tucson, Arizona, starts getting hot in April, and by June it's nearly unbearable. While I would love to leave town for the entire summer, I usually have to content myself with weekends away. I adore visiting Arizona's small, artistic towns, like Jerome and Sedona, and my friends have been hyping Bisbee for years. It's not a long drive from Tucson, but it's significantly cooler. Bonus points for the fact that we can bring our dog and will be staying in a mountaintop yurt.

Celt's *Invitation to a Bonfire* is part thriller, part love story, inspired by Vladimir Nabokov's marriage.



THE QUICK & THE DEAD BY JOY WILLIAMS

This book is utterly bizarre but compulsively readable. Set in the desert, it's perfect for a trip in the West, when you're seeing the same alien landscape as the characters. Williams also doesn't get enough credit for how funny she is.



A TRUE NOVEL BY MINAE MIZUMURA

This modern Japanese retelling of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* tempers the melodrama of the original without losing any of the stormy passion. To me, it transcends its source material.



GAUDY NIGHT BY DOROTHY L. SAYERS

This is my perfect summer read: It's funny, twisty, feminist, and smart, with sharp insights into the world of female intellectuals that are still relevant today. And it's a cracking good murder mystery to boot.



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RUMAAN ALAM'S

Hamptons Hideaway

This summer, we'll spend a week on Long Island. It's a no-brainer for us: near enough to drive to, beautiful enough to feel like a respite from New York City life, and organized entirely around access to a beach and a pool. We'll cook out, get ice cream, watch the deer (a thrill for my kids), and lounge. This trip isn't about sightseeing or fine dining; it's about relaxing together.

In Alam's new novel, a white woman adopts her black nanny's child. *That Kind of Mother* explores privilege and motherhood.



UNDER THE VOLCANO BY MALCOLM LOWRY

I like to bring a hefty book from my pile of books I've meant to read but somehow never have; this summer, it's Lowry's novel about a Brit in Mexico. A friend was just raving about it, which is, to my mind, the best way to discover a book.



BRIEF LIVES BY ANITA BROOKNER

The kids aren't the only ones tired after a day by the pool. I also like to bring a couple of slender books, like Brookner's novel [about an unlikely friendship], because I feel industrious when I can finish multiple volumes on vacation.



CHARLOTTE'S WEB BY E.B. WHITE

I'm going to read my kids *Charlotte's Web*. I'm confident the boys will be hooked on the story, and I think they're old enough to handle the fact that the title character dies, but I'm not totally convinced I will be able to read it without crying.

COVER IMAGES COURTESY OF (FROM TOP) HARPERCOLLINS PUBLISHERS (2), PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE

Making It Work

What service do you hire out to keep your sanity during the workweek?

By Jane Porter



My husband and I enjoy cooking, but about two years ago, we noticed we were getting into a food rut.

We'd leave all our creativity at the office, even though we have about a dozen cookbooks. I finally decided we should try a meal-kit service. I started researching and found one called PeachDish. It's easy to come home and follow directions, and it also really helps cut down on food waste, since they send you exactly what you need to cook your meal. Now we cook together, and weeknights are a lot more fun.

I have an organizer who helps me clear clutter and arrange the house so it's easier to find things.

Since I'm on the road a lot, it's hard to keep up with everything. I buy a block of hours and use her as needed. I have a house I've lived in for 35 years. As you live in a house, you get things, you put them in a closet, and they never go away. She emptied the kitchen closet while I was doing other stuff, and we worked together to decide what to get rid of and what to keep. I make jewelry, and she organized my supplies. All these little things add up to save a lot of time.

Getting our laundry picked up and dropped off is something my wife and I have come to rely on.

Every Sunday, we get the laundry together, and the delivery guy picks it up. It comes back folded, which I love. When I was growing up, my mother always did everything, and it was instilled in me that that's part of having a work ethic. But being a parent has definitely changed my opinion of domestic work. I think getting help in that area is totally fine, as long as you pay people well for their services. It takes a lot of the pressure off.

I have a 5-year-old pit-shepherd mix we rescued from our humane society, and my husband and I usually also have a foster dog.

Our lives are so busy, and I found I was always on social media asking, "Can someone let my dog out? Can someone go play with my dog for 30 minutes?" Now we use a dog-walking service called Wag. Someone can be at your house in half an hour. It's easy to pull up the app, and in a few seconds you have a walker. In my line of work, I never really have a set schedule, so the service is a big help for me and my dogs.

I outsource the scheduling of my doctors' visits and other tasks to a virtual personal assistant.

When I realized I hadn't had my annual exam in about three years, I decided to hire someone. My husband said, "If this were a task for your business, you would have done it immediately, but because it's about taking care of yourself, it goes undone." It's hard to make the time to call and schedule these types of things, but if it's on my calendar, I'll go.



JACKIE GATES, 33,
LEAD PROCUREMENT
MANAGER FOR MARKETING
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EDUCATIONAL
CONSULTANT IN
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DIRECTOR OF MARKETING
AT BEVAN-RABELL INC.,
A GENERAL AVIATION
AND AVIONICS FIRM IN
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ADRIENNE DORISON, 32,
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Ahhh...

Your breath can help you chill out and make a fresh start when you are feeling agitated, emotionally overheated, or impatient. Use this cooling breath as a personal air conditioner to get relief from irritations and upsets. Make an oval with your lips. Draw in a long, strong breath—you will probably hear a sound like the wind blowing. The air coming into your body will cool off your tongue. At the end of the inhalation, close your lips and gently press your tongue against the roof of your mouth. Feel the coolness of your tongue soothe your nervous system and calm your mind. Hold your breath for three seconds, then slowly exhale through your nose. Repeat five times.

—CYNDI LEE, cyndilee.com



BACKYARD BLISS

MAYBE YOU HAVE ACRES OF GLORIOUS GREEN.
MAYBE YOU'VE GOT A FIRE ESCAPE.
EITHER WAY, NEGLECTING YOUR OUTDOOR SPACE
WOULD BE A CRIME AGAINST SUMMERTIME.
COME OUT BACK—THIS IS GOING TO BE FUN.

Photographs by
Thayer Allyson Gowdy

Illustrations by
Marisol Ortega





A Little Slice of Home

How one Texas transplant learned—through the universal language of barbecue—that you can find refuge in any yard, no matter its size

By APRIL REYNOLDS

M

Y CHILDHOOD IS A STUDY of what folks can do in a backyard. In ours, we pitched tents and played house; we made swings and hung them from trees. My father was less than pleased with what we did with his water hose to achieve that project. My sisters and I built a tree house

that was so rickety it didn't last a week. We gave up when I managed to fall out of it. It's a wonder I didn't break a leg. But mainly, my family cooked.

It's hot in Texas, and we didn't have an air conditioner. So on Fridays we went out to the backyard to have a fish fry. And in my father's opinion, "Where else would you fry fish?" On Saturdays, my father would argue with himself. *Chicken or beef? Beef or chicken?* And once that was settled, Dad would marinate a brisket, heavy on the pepper, and pull up a lawn chair. Billows of smoke would unfurl from the oil drum my uncle Herman had wrought into a smoker and given to my father as a wedding gift.

**On Fridays we went
out to the backyard to have a
fish fry. In my father's
opinion, "Where else would
you fry fish?"**

The sight was arresting in the jungle that was my Dallas backyard. Wild grass reached my father's knees. From the porch, my sisters and I would watch him murmur. "I should have put in more pineapple juice. More garlic powder. Where did that paprika go?" His worry circled the 20 pounds of brisket in the smoker. What he didn't do is lift the lid.

"Just open the lid and check it out, Daddy."

My father's response always sounded like a chorus in a song: "Naw, babies. If you looking, you ain't cooking." He followed his own advice until the final hours of barbecuing, when he had to lift the lid and swaddle the brisket in a paper bag to keep it moist. We Texans call this the Texan napkin.

When we weren't barbecuing in our backyard, we headed across town to cook on my uncles' and cousins' lawns. My dad was from Arkansas and was a beef man; my uncles were raised in Georgia and loved pork.

"You know why I love pork?" my uncle Fonz would ask my dad.

"Why's that?"

"'Cause pork loves me." I think my father lost those arguments mainly because he was outnumbered.

I'D LIKE TO SAY that when I moved to New York City at 18, the things I missed most were playing, sleeping, and cooking in our backyard. It stands to reason, since I had spent most of my childhood out there. But the fact is, its absence was thrilling. I would spend hours on the phone with my dad explaining the mind-boggling state of your average New York backyard.

"First of all, nobody has a lick of grass."

"Oh, come on! You're messing with me."

"No, Daddy, it's true. They've got grass in the park and that's it."

"Even the rich folk?"

"Even the rich folk, Daddy. Best they can do is put these little bitty trees in planters on their balconies."

"Lord. Well, I'll be."

IT TOOK MOVING to Astoria, Queens, 12 years ago to miss my childhood backyard. My neighborhood is a combination of three-family apartment buildings and multistory housing complexes. The sidewalks are filled with people hawking their wares: cellphone cases, sunglasses, scarves. All of us—Japanese, Egyptian, Bulgarian, Mexican, Tibetan, Greek—fondle their merchandise. One day, minding my own business (as New Yorkers are wont to do), I smelled smoke. And it wasn't the smell of a building burning down.

It was the very distinctive odor of fire and meat coming together. I asked my Japanese neighbor across the street what they were doing.

"Yakitori."

"Yaki what?"

"Taste it."

"What is it, exactly?" I looked at the square box they stood next to. The grill was latticed. The meat—chicken, beef, and pork—was cut into discrete pieces and bunched together on metal skewers.

"Taste it." My father used to tell me, if it wasn't wiggling too much, put it in your mouth. Eating food people offer is the fastest way to make friends. What I chewed was salty and just a touch sweet. My neighbors were grinning at me. I'm pretty sure I was grinning too. I had moved to Queens and found my people.

From then on, I seemed to smell smoke everywhere. The Bosnians down the block were grilling these little sausages; the Cambodians an avenue away were charring satays. Best of all, my butcher became my close friend. John Kosmidis was not a man deterred by a pint-size backyard. When he roasted a baby lamb on a spit for Greek Easter at his in-laws' apartment building, I was invited. There was enough room for six of us to stand shoulder to shoulder and pluck meat just as it was done. That first year in Queens was a heady one, and it got me thinking: "If all these people can cook like this in backyards the size of postage stamps with not a blade of grass to be found, why can't I?"

It wouldn't be the same as back home, but so what? Standing in the corner of our mostly concrete backyard is my Weber smoker. I don't get to cook the way we did in Texas. In a city, one is forced to share. My backyard is communal property; I've got to find out who is planning something on any given day. I don't get to sleep next to my smoker in a lawn chair like my father did. I check the temperature with a pair of binoculars from my window. I tote platters of beer-butt chicken and Kansas City-style pork ribs and brisket—complete with a Texas napkin—up and down three flights of stairs. There's not a speck of grass or a lick of shade. But when I take a bite of brisket with a dill pickle slice on top, I think to myself, "Wherever you are, you can find your happiness in a backyard."

Reynolds is a novelist who teaches at Sarah Lawrence College. Her second book, *The Shape of Dreams*, is forthcoming.

VACATION IN PLACE

NO AIRPLANE FOOD, NO RESORT
FEES, NO COMPLAINING FROM THE
BACK SEAT. THESE OUTDOOR
TRANSFORMATIONS WILL LET YOU
HAVE THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE
WITHOUT EVER LEAVING HOME.

By Emily Hsieh





Build Your Own Backyard Water Park



No pool? No problem. Create a cooling oasis with some clever water-centric activities. Amp up the joy of running through sprinklers by tossing beach balls back and forth through the spray. A water table filled with plastic bowls, measuring cups, and floating toys will keep toddlers engaged for hours (or close to it). Offer extra shade with umbrellas: If half your yard is shaded, estimate one umbrella per 8 to 10 people; if you have zero coverage, go with one umbrella per five or six people. Party-rental companies offer umbrellas that can be borrowed for about \$20 a day.



ENCHANTED SPRINKLER

Ginormous Unicorn Yard Sprinkler, \$50; target.com.

OVERSIZE UMBRELLA

Peacoat Blue Stripe 10-foot cantilever outdoor umbrella, \$170; worldmarket.com.

GRAPHIC CHAIR

Teak sling chair, \$358; serenaandlily.com.

BALLOON BUNCH

Zuru self-sealing water balloons, \$29 for 300; amazon.com.

GAS GRILL

Everdure by Heston Blumenthal The Furnace grill, \$900; williams-sonoma.com.

PLAY STATION

Sand and Water table, \$399; crateandbarrel.com for similar.

BEACH BALL SPRINKLER

Little Tikes Ultimate Beach Ball sprinkler, \$15; bedbathandbeyond.com.

BUBBLE MACHINE

1byone portable bubble machine, \$40; amazon.com.

VIBRANT HOSE

Dramm ColorStorm premium rubber hose, \$58; amazon.com.

COLORFUL COOLER

Yeti Roadie 20 cooler, \$200; dickssportinggoods.com.

"Offer an array of sunscreen and insect repellents in a cooler for a soothing touch when applied to skin."
—Colin Cowie, event planner

READER IDEA: "TO CREATE A GIANT BUBBLE-BLOWING FACTORY, FILL A KID-SIZE POOL HALFWAY WITH SOAPY WATER AND ADD SLOTTED SPOONS, STRAINERS, AND OTHER HOLEY OBJECTS." —SANDE M.



3 FUN FORMULAS FOR WATER GAMES

WATER ARCADE

Balance Ping-Pong balls atop golf tees stuck into a brick of floral foam (sold at craft stores). Have players blow water through straws to knock them over.

WATER BALLOON DODGEBALL

Set up a line of water balloons across the middle of your playing field and divide players into two teams. The last team standing wins.

DRIP, DRIP, DOUSE

Try a summertime version of Duck, Duck, Goose. Whoever is "It" carries a bucket of water around the circle, dripping a little water onto each player's head. Eventually, "It" picks someone to douse with the remaining water. "Douse" must tag "It" before "It" makes it around the circle, or else "Douse" becomes the new "It."

Easy Iced Fruit Pops

Divide chopped fruit (such as strawberries, cherries, kiwis, and blackberries) among 4-oz. ice pop molds. Fill each mold with lemonade or lemon-lime soda. Insert ice pop sticks and freeze until firm.



TO BUY: Zoku classic pop molds, \$15; williams-sonoma.com. Mums the Word fabric in blue, \$64 per yard; katiekime.com.

OUTDOOR ESSENTIALS The pros reveal their go-to goods for all types of backyard gatherings.

OUTDOOR SPEAKERS

"Don't bother playing DJ. Outsource the playlist to the younger crowd and it'll turn into an all-ages dance party." —Christiane Lemieux, founder of the Inside, a customized-furnishings company

TO BUY: Sonos One, \$199; sonos.com.

HEADLAMPS

"Set out a basketful for kids to play headlamp tag after dark."

—Dan Braun, founder and CEO of Camp Navarro in Northern California

TO BUY: Three Trees Headlamp, \$10; amazon.com.

FOLDING BEACH CHAIRS

"Ikea's Mysingö [\$25; ikea.com] is my all-time favorite for bright, lightweight, and inexpensive seating."

—Elizabeth Demos, a Savannah, Georgia-based designer and prop stylist

SPECKLED ENAMELWARE

"This stuff telegraphs summer. Plus, it's durable and all you need for a pretty outdoor table." —Lemieux

TO BUY: Graniteware breakfast plates, \$85 for 4; barnlight.com.

OUTDOOR BEANBAGS

"Inflatable loungers by Chillbo [\$55 each; chillbo.com] work equally well on grass and in water." —Braun

For more ideas for budget-friendly outdoor decor, visit realsimple.com/backyard.

Build Your Own Backyard Campsite

At the heart of every camp is a fire. In your own backyard, a fire pit makes it easy and keeps it contained (event planner Tara Guérard likes the Red Ember Cast Iron Fire Pit, \$140; hayneedle.com). Spread gravel beneath your fire pit to create a barrier between it and any flammable debris. If you choose to light an in-ground fire, check with your town's public safety office first to confirm local regulations. To create extra seating, contact a nearby tree-removal company to get stumps to use as stools. Old-school games, like cornhole, horseshoes, and lawn dice, never fail to please. You can also look for oversize outdoor versions of Jenga or dominoes.

"A blow-up pool filled with pillows and blankets makes a cozy nook for lounging and stargazing."
—Natalie Good, owner of A Good Affair





FOOTED FIRE PIT

Sunnydaze Decor cast-iron bowl fire pit, \$151; hayneedle.com.

TINY TENT

Asweets 4 Wall Cotton Play Teepee, \$95; wayfair.com.

USB LANTERN

Forest Lantern, \$50; barebonesliving.com.

LOUNGE POOL

Splash Outside the Lines! pool, \$70; minnidip.com.

CAFÉ LIGHTS

Edison-style string lights, from \$20; worldmarket.com.

MODERN CORNHOLE

Black Triangle cornhole set, \$280; wolfum.com.

ROASTING STICKS

Steel & Wood Roasting Forks, \$56 for 8; shopterrain.com.

No-Fail Foil Packets

Beef & Potato Packets

Toss 4 sliced potatoes with 1 sliced onion and 1 Tbsp. olive oil; season with salt and pepper. Divide potatoes and onions among 4 large pieces of aluminum foil. Top each with 6 oz. ground beef and a squirt each ketchup and mustard. Seal packets and throw on a roaring campfire or hot grill or in a 400°F oven. Cook until potatoes are tender, 20 to 25 minutes.

S'more Packets

Toss 8 graham crackers with 8 large marshmallows and 4 1-oz. chocolate bars broken into pieces. Divide mixture among 4 large pieces of aluminum foil. Seal packets and throw on a roaring campfire or hot grill or in a 400°F oven until chocolate melts, 5 to 10 minutes.

TO BUY:
Diagonal-stripe fabric in Lagoon, \$158 per yard; rebecca atwood.com.



For s'more inspiration, go to realsimple.com/indoorsmores.

READER IDEA: "THROW 99 PENNIES INTO THE BACKYARD AND TELL THE KIDS THAT WHEN THEY FIND 100 PENNIES, YOU WILL GIVE THEM ICE CREAM." —LINDA MAE A.

Paint a white rectangle onto a sturdy drop cloth for an inexpensive movie screen. Attach grommets to the corners (you only need a hammer) and secure it between two trees with rope.



Build Your Own Backyard Movie Theater

Outdoor movie magic starts with a projector—the options out there are easier to use and more affordable than ever (Oh Joy! blog founder and creative director Joy Cho's pick: the DB Power T20, \$99; amazon.com). Make your own screen with a drop cloth, or invest in an inflatable option (EasyGO 14' Inflatable Mega Screen, \$148; amazon.com). The closer the projector is to the screen, the smaller, sharper, and more colorful the movie will be. "Tape down the cord with colored duct tape on hard surfaces to minimize the possibility of tripping," says interior designer and stylist Emily Henderson. Create a concession stand on a garden caddy or bar cart offering drinks, popcorn, and classic movie treats. Ask guests to RSVP with the name of their favorite movie, and pick one from a hat.



MULTILEVEL STAND

Three Tier Folding Plant Stand, \$70; worldmarket.com.

OUTDOOR PILLOW

Calliope Maui pillow, \$35; pier1.com.

RESIN COOLER

Tina Frey large white bucket, \$380; marchsf.com.

BEVERAGE DISPENSER

Bubble Glass Drink Dispenser, \$30; worldmarket.com.

PRO-STYLE PROJECTOR

Epson Home Cinema 660 SVGA 3LCD projector, \$360; bestbuy.com.

ENAMEL BOWL

Pastel enamel salad bowl, \$48; shopterrain.com.

DRINK STATION

Riviera bar, \$798; serenaandlily.com.

COMFY SEATING

Stripes Bean Bag Lounger, \$116; wayfair.com.

"After the show winds down, play some movie trivia. Try Heads Up!, a charades-style app for your phone."
—Nicole Gibbons, interior designer

READER IDEA: "GIVE THE KIDS A LITTLE PAIL OF WATER AND A FAT PAINTBRUSH. THEY CAN 'PAINT' THE SIDEWALKS, THE HOUSE, AND EACH OTHER WITHOUT MAKING A MESS." —BRENDA R.

Ode to a Trampoline

An appreciation for a toy shared and loved by a group of neighbors in San Francisco

By ELIZABETH WEIL



M

Y NEIGHBOR to the east has three hand-painted tombstones in her tiny San Francisco backyard, commemorating the lives of “Clancy, a hen so sweet,” “Flower Dowager, poultry supreme,” and “Dupres, a very fine chicken.” The birds had hopped every day through the hole we cut in the fence that separates my garden from hers and had spent a lot of time bawking outside my office’s glass door. She also had a gravestone for “Chix, an excellent cat.” Now we need a marker for another death in the family: the trampoline.

It appeared one day, 14 years ago, the relaxation therapy of a tenant who, within six months, had moved in and out of the apartment, leaving behind this 12-foot-round specimen of rubber, aluminum, and joy. In the years that followed, our baby grew into a toddler and our toddler into a preschooler, and then one day my husband yelled to the new tenant, a single mom with a son between our girls’ ages, “Hey, neighbor! What do you think of me cutting another hole in the fence right here?” She gave the thumbs-up. My husband found his Sawzall. Fifteen minutes later we had a kid-size hole in the redwood.

Out the front door on our San Francisco block were cars, danger, a whole adult world: aging parents, too-expensive groceries, garbage cans to try (and fail) to remember to pull onto the sidewalk each Wednesday night. Out the back were giggles and low-key mystery, a child’s world: Meyer lemon trees, a garden fountain on which to launch roly-poly bugs, the endlessly undulating trampoline. Soon the family of five who lived kitty-corner from us cut a child-size hole in their fence, and then the family of four to the south of them did so too. No parental permission was required for the kids to go jump. Sometimes mine screamed, “Mom, bye!” Often they just self-released. On the trampoline was a whole life, or practice for one. At age 14, my older daughter sat on it and tried to figure out how to stay close to the best friend she’d had since kindergarten and was starting to outgrow. At age 12, my younger daughter jumped out there with her sixth-grade boyfriend, because what else do you do with a sixth-grade boyfriend?

Then, a few weeks ago, the trampoline died. The rim rusted out, and the formerly single mother’s hunky new husband lovingly disassembled it and carted it off to the dump. I’m fighting the urge to replace it—circle of life and all. “RIP trampoline, a true backyard gift.”

Weil is the coauthor, with Clemantine Wamariya, of *The Girl Who Smiled Beads*.



"Ask guests to bring their own blankets, or load up on towels from the dollar store to make sure everyone stays cozy until the credits run."

—Kate Turner,
principal designer of
Kate & Company



BANISHING BUGS

Expert-approved ideas for keeping mosquitoes at bay

"Place jarred citronella candles or insect-repelling incense under the dining table to help keep feet and ankles bite-free." —Colin Cowie

"I first spotted mosquito-repellent bracelets [\$19 for 6; homedepot.com] making the rounds at my son's soccer tournaments. They're sweat-proof and kid-safe." —Elizabeth Demos

"I'm a big fan of Burt's Bees herbal insect repellent [\$8; burtsbees.com]. It's safe for the whole family and smells like yummy lemons." —Nicole Gibbons

"The Thermacell Patio Shield [\$25; thermacell.com] creates a barrier against mosquitoes without any scent or flame." —Tara Guérard



TO BUY:
Cleo navy indoor/outdoor rug, \$906 (5 by 8 ft.); annieselke.com.
Harbour Island floor pillow (far left), \$188; serenaandlily.com.

Popcorn 3 Ways

Un-Cheddar

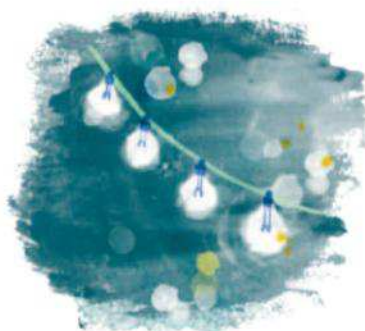
Spread 10 cups freshly popped popcorn (from ½ cup kernels) on a rimmed baking sheet and spray lightly with olive oil spray. Toss with ¼ cup nutritional yeast, 1 tsp. kosher salt, and ½ tsp. garlic powder.

Lemon-Pepper-Parmesan

Spread 10 cups freshly popped popcorn (from ½ cup kernels) on a rimmed baking sheet and spray lightly with olive oil spray. Toss with ¼ cup grated Parmesan, the zest of 1 lemon, 1 tsp. kosher salt, and 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper.

Furikake

Spread 10 cups freshly popped popcorn (from ½ cup kernels) on a large rimmed baking sheet and spray lightly with olive oil spray. Toss with ¼ cup furikake and 1 tsp. kosher salt.



STRING LIGHTS 101

Look for bistro lights, which have a retro, European feel and large bulbs that give off plenty of light. LEDs, while more energy efficient, emit a cooler, less face-flattering light. For easy installation along wood rails or fencing, use plastic telephone-wire nail-in clips (\$3 for 20; homedepot.com), which have hooks to slip the string-light cable into with ease.

READER IDEA: "FILL TWO-LITER BOTTLES WITH WATER AND FREEZE THEM (OR FILL WITH SAND). LINE THEM UP LIKE BOWLING PINS AND USE A SOCCER BALL TO KNOCK THEM OVER." —ROSIE W.



JUST ADD SUNSHINE

WHAT MAKES FOR A TRULY RELAXING
BACKYARD MEAL, AT YOUR PLACE OR
THEIRS? AN ARSENAL OF SECRET-WEAPON
RECIPES YOU CAN WHIP UP ALL SUMMER
LONG, IN AS LITTLE AS 10 MINUTES FLAT.

By Dawn Perry

Photographs by Victor Protasio

Illustrations by Marisol Ortega







GERMAN BEET-AND- POTATO SALAD

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR, 20 MINUTES**
SERVES **6**

- 2 lb. gold or Chioggia beets
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Yukon Gold potatoes
- 4 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 8 oz. sliced bacon
- 2 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. whole-grain mustard
- 1 shallot, thinly sliced

PREHEAT oven to 400°F. Place beets, potatoes, and 1 cup water in a 13-by-9-inch baking dish. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons oil and season with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt and several grinds of pepper. Cover with aluminum foil and roast until beets and potatoes are tender when pierced with a small sharp knife, 45 to 55 minutes. Uncover and set aside until cool enough to handle, about 15 minutes.

PEEL cooled beets, slice into wedges, and transfer to a large bowl. Using your hands, gently crush potatoes into bite-size pieces and add to beets.

COOK bacon in a large skillet over medium, turning occasionally, until crisp, 5 to 7 minutes. Drain on a paper towel-lined plate and let cool 5 minutes. Break or chop into pieces and add to beets and potatoes.

WHISK together vinegar, mustard, shallot, remaining 2 tablespoons oil, remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, and several grinds of pepper in a small bowl. Pour dressing over beet mixture and toss to combine. Serve at room temperature.



SWEET AND SPICY TOMATO GLAZE

ACTIVE TIME **5 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **5 MINUTES**
MAKES **1 CUP**

- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 4 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 tsp. toasted sesame oil
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

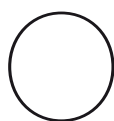
WHISK together all ingredients in a bowl until smooth.

BASTE chicken, pork, steak, burgers, or hot dogs with mixture during the last 5 minutes of grilling. Store glaze, tightly covered, in refrigerator for up to 1 week.

Everybody's Out Back

How sharing a yard with five other families helped one New Englander give her kids the freedom to roam

By MIRA T. LEE



OUR BACKYARD in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was never much to look at. A small, weedy patch of green wedged behind a pair of triple-deckers, it harbored a wobbly plastic table and a few cracked chairs. But accessible to six growing families, it would slowly evolve as our community did. One year we invested in lawn-care treatments; the next, a cedar fence; then a deck big enough to hold a wooden Ikea picnic table.

Our fancier neighbors had stone patios, trellises, meticulous plantings, and koi ponds, but our humble little backyard had heart—soon it would become a social hub to a dozen neighborhood kids, ages newborn to 10, who didn't care if the grass was dry or the dirt pocked with holes, as long as they could run and kick and yell at the top of their lungs.

Come the New England spring, we all propped open our doors. The kids tore up and down the back stairwells, ducking in and out of one another's apartments. Even the toddlers wandered freely, old-school style, in the care of communal eyes and ears.

Summer evenings, we'd congregate outside, each family with its own version of mac and cheese and cucumber wheels. Someone would dole out ice pops, or we'd split a watermelon. We shared a lawn mower, a sprinkler, an inflatable pool, insect repellent, ice packs, and Band-Aids too. Some weekends, entire afternoons passed unscheduled. Kids soaked one another with the hose, flew paper airplanes from balconies, socked Wiffle balls onto



the roof. As one shuffled off to baseball, another showed up with a bag of water balloons. And so on until the sun sank low and a second-floor mom called out, "Charlieeee, it's time for your bath!"

Amid whines and protests, parents corralled their kids. But the next morning, bright and early, doors flung open again. With my tea on the porch, I'd hear the clatter of plates or the roar of a vacuum. First-floor Henry had dashed out to play basketball; second-floor Charlie's baby sister was demanding juice.

My kids downed their cereal, raced downstairs. "Charlieeee? Can Charlie come out to play?"

Suddenly, I'd flash back to my care-free days in suburban Buffalo, New York, when I'd roam with my neighborhood pack from dawn to dusk.

Last year, we moved to a bigger apartment. It's a lovely space, nearly double the size of our old one. But there's no yard. No hub. And that's made me realize why I loved that little shared space so fiercely: It was a chance to impart one tiny, idyllic piece of my own childhood to my children.

Lee is the author of *Everything Here Is Beautiful*.





GARLICKY PAN CON TOMATE

ACTIVE TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **10 MINUTES**
SERVES **8**

- 1 1-lb. loaf ciabatta, halved horizontally
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 1 large clove garlic, peeled
- 2 large ripe tomatoes, halved
- Flaky sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

PREHEAT grill to high or oven to broil with oven rack 4 inches from heat. Brush cut sides of ciabatta with oil. Grill directly on grates or broil cut side up on a baking sheet until lightly charred in spots, 3 to 5 minutes.

RUB garlic all over cut sides of ciabatta. Rub tomato halves over cut sides of ciabatta, letting seeds and juice fall on top. Drizzle with more oil and season with salt and pepper.

CUT crosswise into 1½-inch-thick pieces and serve.



KIWI-CUCUMBER RELISH

ACTIVE TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **10 MINUTES**
MAKES **2 CUPS**

- 1 small English cucumber, chopped (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups)
- 3 kiwis, peeled and chopped (about 1 cup), divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$ bunch fresh cilantro leaves and tender stems, coarsely chopped
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lime juice (from 1 lime)
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. kosher salt

PLACE cucumber and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped kiwis in a medium bowl. Place cilantro, jalapeño, lime juice, salt, and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup kiwis in a blender and process until smooth, about 15 seconds. Pour mixture over cucumber and kiwis and toss to combine.

SERVE with chips or on top of burgers, hot dogs, chicken, or fish.



CRUNCHY BROCCOLINI WITH LEMON AND PECANS

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **20 MINUTES**
SERVES **6**

- 4 bunches (1¾ lb.)
Broccolini, trimmed,
divided
- 6 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1 tsp. kosher salt,
divided
- Freshly ground black
pepper
- 1 lemon
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- ½ cup pecans, toasted
and chopped

PREHEAT oven to 400°F. Toss 3 bunches Broccolini with 4 tablespoons oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and several grinds of pepper on a rimmed baking sheet. Arrange in a single layer and roast, shaking sheet halfway through, until charred in spots, 12 to 15 minutes.

MEANWHILE, thinly slice half the lemon. Stack slices and finely chop. Transfer chopped lemon (including peel) to a food processor and add the juice of the remaining lemon half, honey, remaining 2 tablespoons oil, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt; process until combined, about 10 seconds.

CHOP roasted and raw Broccolini into 2-inch pieces and toss with lemon dressing. Serve topped with toasted pecans.




VANILLA PEACHES IN ROSÉ

ACTIVE TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME
2 HOURS, 10 MINUTES
SERVES **8**

- 8 firm ripe peaches,
apricots, or nec-
tarines (about 3½
lb.), halved and pitted
- 1 750-ml bottle dry
rosé
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 vanilla bean,
split lengthwise
- 3 whole star anise
(optional)
- Vanilla ice cream,
for serving

ARRANGE peaches in a 13-by-9-inch baking dish. Combine rosé and sugar in a medium pot. Scrape seeds from vanilla bean and add seeds, bean, and star anise to pot. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until sugar is dissolved, 5 to 7 minutes. Pour rosé syrup over fruit and let macerate, uncovered, at room temperature for 2 hours or refrigerated overnight.

SERVE peaches with ice cream, with rosé syrup spooned over top.

 Get a guide to grilling every kind of meat, fish, and vegetable at realsimple.com/howtogrill.





THICK CUT FOR MORE
SEA-SALTED CRUNCH



food



JULY

When you're bouncing from pool to park, from the beach to your own backyard, summer (to paraphrase Ferris Bueller) moves pretty fast. We'd hate for you to miss it tied to the kitchen. So don't overthink: Make a batch of salsa (page 136) to snack on while you fire up the grill. Throw on one of our favorite hot dogs (page 138) or some hoisin-glazed chicken burgers (page 132) and cool off with an iced tea sweetened with the easiest simple syrup (page 140). Then sit back, relax, and count the fireflies.



BACONSISTENTLY DELICIOUS



Oscar Mayer bacon comes through with
baconsistently great flavor every time
you cook it.

Easy Dinner 1**Cheesy heirloom tomato tart**ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **35 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

✓ Vegetarian ✓ Family Friendly



12 oz. mixed heirloom tomatoes (about 3 medium), sliced $\frac{1}{4}$ in. thick

1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved lengthwise

$1\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. kosher salt, divided

3 oz. sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded (about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup mayonnaise

2 scallions, finely chopped

1 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh dill, plus sprigs for serving
Pinch of cayenne

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. freshly ground black pepper, divided

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil

10 frozen phyllo pastry sheets (from a 16-oz. pkg.), thawed

PREHEAT oven to 450°F with a rack in lowest position. Arrange tomatoes on a large baking sheet lined with paper towels. Season with 1 teaspoon salt and let stand 10 minutes. Pat dry with paper towels.

MEANWHILE, stir together cheese, mayonnaise, scallions, chopped dill, cayenne, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper in a medium bowl. Place oil in a small bowl. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper, brush with oil, and place 1 phyllo sheet on top; brush with oil. Repeat with remaining 9 phyllo sheets and oil. Spread cheese mixture evenly over top, leaving a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch border. Top with tomatoes and season with remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon each salt and pepper.

BAKE until crust is golden brown, 18 to 20 minutes; let cool 5 minutes. Top with dill sprigs just before serving.

PER SERVING: 558 CALORIES, 44G FAT (10G SAT.), 33MG CHOL., 2G FIBER, 10G PRO., 31G CARB., 1,150MG SOD., 3G SUGAR

Easy Dinner 2

Hoisin-glazed chicken burgers with carrot slaw

ACTIVE TIME **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **25 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

✓ Quick Cooking ✓ Family Friendly

- 1¼ lb. ground chicken
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1½ Tbsp. canola oil
- ¼ cup hoisin sauce
- 1 cup shredded carrots (from 2 large carrots)
- ½ cup cilantro leaves and tender stems
- ¼ cup torn fresh mint
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice (from 1 lime)
- 2 tsp. sugar
- 4 hamburger buns, split and toasted
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- Waffle fries, for serving

PLACE ground chicken, pepper, and 1 teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Mix together with your hands and shape into 4 patties.

HEAT oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high. Cook patties until a thermometer inserted in thickest portion registers 165°F, 5 to 6 minutes per side. Brush patties on 1 side with half of the hoisin sauce; flip patties and brush with remaining hoisin. Remove from heat.

TOSS carrots, cilantro, mint, lime juice, sugar, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt in a medium bowl.

BUILD burgers with buns, mayonnaise, patties, and carrot slaw. Serve with fries.

PER SERVING: 549 CALORIES, 30G FAT (6G SAT.), 136MG CHOL., 2G FIBER, 27G PRO., 37G CARB., 1,362MG SOD., 11G SUGAR



COOK WITH COZI

Get *Real Simple*'s easy weeknight-dinner recipes in Cozi, a free meal-planning and organizing app from Meredith Corporation (available on iTunes and Google Play).

Easy Dinner 3

Grilled scallops with corn salad

ACTIVE TIME 30 MINUTES TOTAL TIME 30 MINUTES SERVES 4

✓ Quick Cooking ✓ Gluten-Free

- 7 Tbsp. olive oil, divided, plus more for grill grates
- 3 ears corn, shucked
- 1 large poblano chile, seeded and chopped
- 1 medium shallot, thinly sliced
- 3 Tbsp. fresh lime juice (from 2 limes)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. ground cumin
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 12 large sea scallops ($1\frac{1}{2}$ lb.)
- 4 cups mixed salad greens
- 1 ripe avocado, pitted and sliced

PREHEAT grill or grill pan to high (450°F to 500°F) and lightly oil grates. Grill corn, uncovered, turning occasionally, until corn begins to char, 10 to 12 minutes. Remove from grill and let cool slightly. Cut kernels from cobs and discard cobs; transfer kernels to a medium bowl. Add poblano, shallot, 5 tablespoons oil, lime juice, cumin, $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper; stir to combine.

THREAD 3 scallops onto 2 6-inch side-by-side bamboo skewers so scallops lie flat. Repeat with 6 skewers and remaining scallops (using 8 skewers total). Pat scallops dry with paper towels. Drizzle with remaining 2 tablespoons oil and season with remaining 1 teaspoon salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper. Grill scallops, uncovered, until grill marks appear, about 4 minutes. Using a fish spatula, flip and cook until scallops are just cooked through, about 3 minutes more.

TOSS salad greens with corn mixture and avocado. Top with grilled scallops.

PER SERVING: 495 CALORIES, 31G FAT (4G SAT.), 41MG CHOL., 6G FIBER, 25G PRO., 33G CARB., 1,899MG SOD., 10G SUGAR





Easy Dinner 4

Pork tenderloin with marinated grilled peppers

ACTIVE TIME **30 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

✓ Quick Cooking ✓ Gluten-Free

- 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -lb. pork tenderloins
- 5 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 8 oz. sweet mini peppers, halved lengthwise
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup torn fresh basil leaves
- 2 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. fresh oregano leaves
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced

PREHEAT grill to high (450°F to 500°F). Drizzle pork with 1 tablespoon oil and season all over with $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt and 1 teaspoon pepper. Grill

pork, covered, turning every 5 minutes, until a meat thermometer inserted in thickest portion registers 140°F, 16 to 18 minutes. Remove from grill and let rest 5 minutes.

MEANWHILE, toss mini peppers with 1 tablespoon oil. Grill, turning once, until charred on both sides, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a medium bowl and add basil, vinegar, oregano, garlic, and remaining 3 tablespoons oil, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper. Let marinate 10 minutes.

SLICE pork and serve with marinated peppers.

PER SERVING: 350 CALORIES, 21G FAT (4G SAT.), 111MG CHOL., 1G FIBER, 36G PRO., 3G CARB., 1,053MG SOD., 1G SUGAR

Easy Dinner 5

Cantaloupe salad with sliced feta

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **20 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

✓ Quick Cooking ✓ Vegetarian



- 1 small shallot, finely chopped
- 5 Tbsp. Champagne or white wine vinegar
- 1 3-lb. cantaloupe, peeled, seeded, and sliced
- 1 English cucumber, sliced
- 6 oz. feta cheese, thinly sliced (about 1½ cups)
- ½ loaf ciabatta, sliced
- 7 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- ½ cup loosely packed fresh basil leaves
- ½ cup roughly chopped toasted almonds
- ⅛ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

STIR shallot and vinegar in a small bowl and let stand 10 minutes.

MEANWHILE, arrange cantaloupe and cucumber on a large platter and top with feta; set aside.

HEAT a grill pan over high. Brush both sides of ciabatta slices with 3 tablespoons oil. Grill until charred on both sides, 1 to 2 minutes per side.

WHISK 1 teaspoon salt and remaining 4 tablespoons oil into shallot-vinegar mixture. Drizzle over salad. Top with basil, almonds, pepper, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Serve with grilled ciabatta.

PER SERVING: 622 CALORIES, 29G FAT (11G SAT.), 38MG CHOL., 4G FIBER, 13G PRO., 48G CARB., 1,390MG SOD., 19G SUGAR

Make It Yourself

A DELICIOUS ESSENTIAL THAT'S BETTER
HOMEMADE THAN STORE-BOUGHT. WE'LL PROVE IT.


THIS MONTH: FRESH SALSA

ACTIVE TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **15 MINUTES**
SERVES **8**

- 1 lb. plum tomatoes, cored and chopped (2 cups)
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt
- ¼ cup finely chopped red onion
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro leaves
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 1 small clove garlic, finely chopped
- ⅛ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- ½ to 1 jalapeño (depending on desired heat level), seeded and finely chopped

PLACE tomatoes in a large bowl and stir in salt. Let stand at room temperature until tomatoes release their juices, at least 10 minutes and up to 30 minutes.

ADD onion, cilantro, lime juice, garlic, pepper, and jalapeño and stir to combine.

 For a smoother version, check out realsimple.com/blendersalsa.



FOOD STYLING BY ANNA HAMPTON; PROP STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLLEN

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Road Test

Hot Dogs

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By Grace Elkus



BEST BUN LENGTH

Ball Park Bun Size Angus Beef Franks

This classic, all-American dog will star at any backyard barbecue. The crackly skin gives way to a juicy, beefy center—transporting you to a sunny day at the ballpark. It fits snugly into its bun, so every bite boasts the perfect bread-to-hot-dog ratio.

TO BUY: \$5.50 for 14 oz.; at grocery stores.



BEST BEEF

Niman Ranch Fearless Franks Uncured Beef Hot Dogs

Made with 100 percent choice Angus beef, these premium hickory-smoked franks are seasoned with paprika, mustard, and garlic for robust flavor in every bite.

TO BUY: \$7 for 11 oz.; at specialty grocery stores.



BEST TURKEY

Oscar Mayer Natural Turkey Franks

These brand-new, uncured turkey dogs (no added nitrates or nitrites) gave the beefy competitors a run for their money.

TO BUY: \$3.40 for 16 oz.; at grocery stores.



BEST VEGGIE

Yves Jumbo Veggie Dogs

Sixty percent larger than the brand's original dog, this vegan variety is supremely satisfying—for vegetarians and meat eaters alike. Its flavor is surprisingly authentic.

TO BUY: \$4.50 for 13.4 oz.; at grocery stores.



BEST PORK

Olympia Provisions Pork Frankfurters

If you prefer hang-off-the-bun hot dogs with great snap, look no further than these foot-long pork frankfurters from the popular Portland, Oregon-based charcutier.

TO BUY: \$12 for 12 oz.; at specialty grocery stores.



BEST PORK AND BEEF

Coleman Natural Pork & Beef Uncured Hot Dogs

Deliciously plump, with quintessential hot dog flavor, these are the ideal blank canvas for all your favorite fixings.

TO BUY: \$5 for 12 oz.; at grocery stores.

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Grilled **GREEK PIZZA**

For this recipe, visit
ReynoldsKitchens.com

Big Batch

Simple syrup

ACTIVE TIME **10 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **40 MINUTES** MAKES **4 CUPS****Simple Syrup**3 cups sugar
3 cups water

STIR together sugar and water in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high and cook, stirring often, until sugar dissolves, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes. Store syrup in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 month. Use to sweeten iced coffee or tea, cocktails, or our Easy Fresh Fruit Sodas.

Easy Fresh Fruit SodasACTIVE TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **10 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**12 oz. chopped watermelon,
honeydew, or blackberries
4–8 Tbsp. Simple Syrup
32 oz. (4 cups) club soda or
seltzer, chilled

PROCESS fruit in a food processor until smooth. Strain through a fine-mesh strainer over a bowl, pressing with the back of a spoon. Discard solids. (You should have about 1 cup juice.)

FOR 1 SODA: Combine 2 tablespoons fruit juice with 1 to 2 tablespoons Simple Syrup (depending on desired sweetness level). Top with 8 ounces club soda.

PER SERVING: 88 CALORIES, 0G FAT (0G SAT.), 0MG CHOL., 0G FIBER, 0G PRO., 23G CARB., 58MG SOD., 22G SUGAR

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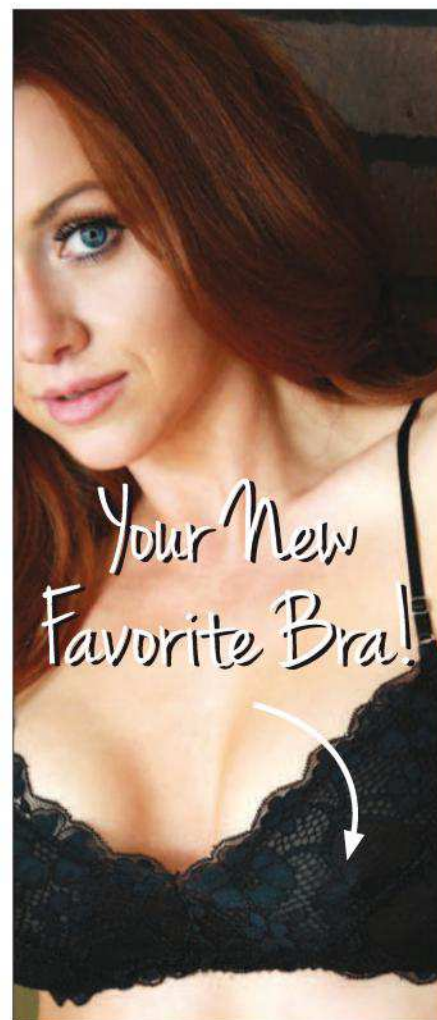
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The Life-Changing Magic of Organizing Your Organizational Supplies

By Julie Vick



Did you visit the Container Store and accidentally buy one of everything? Do you have an organizing project you've been meaning to get to for 10 years? Us too! That's why we put together these transcendent ideas for repurposing your mountain of organizational supplies.

Mason jars: You've probably got a supply of these for projects like baking unicorn cakes or creating jewelry storage jars by dipping them in 24-karat gold. To organize your collection, first sort them by size and color. Then procure an enormous mason jar and arrange the smaller jars inside to construct a stylish statue—perhaps of a robin's nest or Marie Kondo.

Plastic bins: Haven't had time to organize your children's craft supplies into bins of items like "glitter that will be in your carpet forever"? No problem! Just use the bins to build your kids a play area shaped like the Colosseum. The first kid to knock it over has to sort the Lego pile.

Pegboard: That pegboard will someday be a wonderful way to organize all the pots and pans. Until then, turn it into a game of Plinko. The bottom "prize" slots could be fun activities, like scrubbing the bathroom grout or finally converting the Plinko board into the Julia Child–style pots-and-pans organizer you have always visualized.

Cute tiny boxes: Did you buy several boxes thinking they would be perfect to hold some things, but you didn't know what those things would be yet? Just arrange them on a shelf in your bathroom. Your guests won't know they're empty, and they'll be impressed with your organizational skills, which is the whole point of organizing anyway.

Cereal boxes: What should you do with the empty cereal boxes you've held on to in hopes of one day giving them new lives as beautiful drawer organizers? Set them up in a pyramid to make a knock-down game. You'll be surprised by how invigorating it can be to throw something.

Still-in-the-box shelving:

If you haven't had the chance to put together the bookcase you bought to achieve the #shelfies of your dreams on Instagram, don't fret! Paint the box the same color as your living room wall, sketch a seascape on it, and store it directly on the wall.

Hooks: Those extra hooks that are supposed to be for designing vertical organizational systems throughout your home can, in fact, help you save money on a gym membership. Simply attach the hooks to your ceiling for a unique, upside-down rock-climbing space.

Canvas storage bins:

Do you have a stockpile of canvas totes you picked up when they were on sale last year, figuring you would use them somewhere? Now you can! Stuff them with other tote bags and the scarves you have been stress-knitting, then set up a nap area on a closet floor. You'll probably need to rest after all this organizing.

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